THE STUDY OF COW IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE

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by

B. V. V. S. R. SHARMA

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Dedicated
with holy reverence
to
Dr. V. Subbaraogaru

PREFACE

The study of Cow is as good as the very study of "Dāna" and "Dharma". The study of Cow is identical with Dharma, because in the Vedas, in the Dharma Śāstras, in the Itihāsas, in the Purānas and even in the classical literature, wherever there is discussion on Dāna and Dharma, the importance of Cow is also stressed. Therefore, the study of Cow is the study of Dharma itself.

Though some aspects of the study of Cow have already been dealt with by scholars, they are scattered all over the various branches of Sanskrit Literature. So, a detailed and critical study of the Cow has been found to be a desideratum, and has been undertaken by the author and completed. This study has enabled the author to give the readers a glimpse into the spiritual, social, economical and ethical background of our glorious heritage of the cow and cowship.

The author humbly submits that he does not claim a great amount of originality in the composition of this work except for the fact that he has tried, for the first time, in research in Sanskrit to collect, categorise and assess the value of the cow, right from the Vedic times down to the present period.

He takes the opportunity of conveying his deep sense of gratitude to Dr. V. Subbarao, Professor & Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Andhra University, Waltair, at whose behest the author drew the inspiration to undertake this topic and whose sage-like personality, wise guidance and inspiring encouragement alone contributed much to the building up of this manuscript. Without his encouragement and guidance, the author would not have been able to present this book in the present form.

In fine, the author hereby takes the privilege of acknowledging with thanks the invaluable services and cooperation and suggestions lavished in seeing to the bringing of the Mss. into a final shape by Dr. P. Sri Rama Murty, Professor, Sanskrit Department, Andhra University, Waltair; Dr. C. Parthasarathy Rao, Reader, Sanskrit Department, Andhra University, Waltair; Sri T. V. N. Iyer, Principal, Narayan's Type Institute, Ramachandra-

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B.V.V.S.R. Sharma

ABBREVIATIONS

R.V.	Ṛgveda
Y.V.	Yajurveda
T.S.	Taittiriya Saṁhitā
V.S.	Vajasaneya Saṁhitā
A.V.	Atharvaveda
A.B.	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
B.U.	Bṛhadāranyakopaniṣad
K.U.	Kathopaniṣad
C.U.	Chāndyogopaniṣad
S.B.	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
M.S.	Manusmṛti
Ap.G.S.	Āpastamba Gṛhya Sutras
A.G.S.	Āsvalāyana ,,
G.G.S.	Gobhila ,,
P.G.S.	Pāraskara ,,
S.G.S.	Śankhāyana ,,
K.G.S.	Khadira ,,
V.R.	Vālmiki Rāmayaṇa
M.B.	Mahā Bhārata
P.P.	Padmapurāṇa
S.P.	Skāndapurāṇa
B.V.P.	Brahma Vaivartapurāṇa
A.P.	Agnipurāṇa
G.P.	Garuḍa Purāṇa
V.D.P.	Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa
B.P.	Bhāgavata Purāṇa
D.B.	Devībhāgavata
SI.P.	Śiva Purāṇa
M.P.	Matsya Purāṇa

V.P.	Varāha Puraṇa
G.S.	Garga Saṁhitā
BH.P.	Bhāvaprakāśa
RVM.	Raghuvaṁśa
MSS.	Megha Sandeśa
A.K.	Amarakośa
Y.T.P.	Yajñatattva Prakāśa

CONTENTS

Preface		(vii)
Abbreviations		(ix)
1. Introduction	...	1
2. Origin of the Cow	...	11
3. Economics of the Cow	...	31
4. Sacrifice and the Cow	...	53
5. Cow Donations and Results	...	61
6. Goloka, The Region of Cows	...	111
7. Sanctity of the Cow	...	127
8. Medicinal Values	...	165
9. Service and Protection of the Cow	...	185
10. Stories Connected with the Cow	...	209
11. Holy Places Named after the Cow	...	245
12. Conclusion	...	259
Bibliography	...	265
Index	...	269

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1

Introduction

For the Hindus, the Cow is not an ordinary animal—a mere quadruped 'catuṣpād' but is the very symbol of their Culture and Civilization. Human lives are not happy without the bovine species. From time immemorial, the cow has been regarded as 'the sacred mother' and hence the name Kāmadhenu (bestower of every wish) for the celestial cow. In the Ṛgveda it is stated that she is the Mother of Rudras.[1] In the Atharva Veda it is stated that cow is the mother[2], and in the Mahābhārata also cows are described as mothers to all beings.[3] It goes without saying that human beings are chiefly nourished by the milk of the cows.

In ancient India, cows were regarded by the kings as their treasure, and great kings were distinguished by their munificent donations of cows to Brahmins who performed Yāgas for the welfare of the nation. Padma Purāṇa holds that a radiance first came out of the Creator's face and later it was split into four parts—the Vedas, the Fire, the Cow and the Brahmin.[4] And all these four things are useful for the performance of Yāgas and in the absence of any of these the Yāga is impracticable. Yāga simply means offering of Ghee (Havis), curd, milk of the cow etc., to the deities invoked by the chant of Vedic mantras recited by the Brahmins. The Havis is not conveyed directly but is conveyed to the deities through the fire. Thus, in fact

the Cow and the Brahmin are inseparably linked together as though they were one and the same, created solely for the performance of Yāgas. It is stated in the Atharva Veda that the deities begged the cow using Brahmins as their mouth.[5]

The man who gives her not to the Brahmins is sure to get the enmity of all Gods. In olden days sacrifices were performed often. By them deities were satisfied. Then the land became fertile and people were very happy. They believed that, by the performance of Yāgas, they would go to Heaven. Hence Cow is that which leads to Heaven (Gāmnayatīti Gauḥ).

In the Sanskrit Literature we find the words such as, Sahasraguḥ, Gośati and Daśaguḥ. Sahasraguḥ[6] means the owner of one thousand cows, Gośati means the owner of one hundred cows, and Daśaguḥ means the owner of ten cows only. From this we can understand that in the early days of man's civilisation a man was considered rich by the number of cows he possessed. Cows were used as money in exchange for necessary commodities. That is how cow has been made a symbol of wealth.

There is no greater wealth than that of cows. During that 'Bartersystem' to save their wealth i.e. cows, the practice of the prohibition of cow-slaughter is linked up with economic considerations, which is still observed by a number of Hindus; some religious-minded people even believe that a nation where there is cow slaughter, will not progress economically. This holy Mother gives happiness to all individuals in this world and the other world also when she is adored by them properly.

Cow occupies a very prominent place in all ancient Sanskrit literary forms. The greatness of cow is described everywhere in Sanskrit literature, both Vedic as well as classical. In the Vedas there are many hymns relating to Cow. Particularly in the 'Atharva Veda', separate hymns are in the name of 'Vaśa' (the sacrificial cow) and Brahmagavī (the Brahman's Cow) etc. In the 'Mahā Bhārata' the Cow is elaborately depicted and glorified by Vedavyāsa, especially in the Anuśāśanika Parva. There, in the context of charity (Dāna) and piety (Dharma) everywhere the Cow is extolled a lot.

The Kapilā is described elaborately in the Aśvamedhaparva. In the Ramāyaṇa of Vālmiki also, Śabala, the Cow of Vasiṣṭha is described. In all purāṇas she is glorified. Particularly in the

Skānda Purāṇa, Padma Purāṇa, Vishnudharmottara Purāṇa, Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, Garuḍa Purāṇa and Agnipurāṇa we find much interesting material regarding the Mother-Cow. The world of Cows is described in the Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa elaborately.

In the classical literature also Kālidāsa and many other renowned scholars described the greatness of Cow in their Kāvyas. In the Raghu Vaṁśa, the second canto completely covers Nandinī's story which is previously described in the Padma Purāṇa.[7] Not only in the literature, but also in the Dharma Śāstras like Manusmṛti etc., the significance of the greatness of the Cow is stressed by all the sages.

The donation of a cow is stressed even in the Atharvā Veda. It is stated that in Yama's kingdom the cow fulfils each wish for him who donates her. But hell they say is for the man who, when they beg, bestow her not.[8] By donating a cow a person can reach heaven the abode of bliss.

The donation of an elephant is equal to the donation of a thousand steeds. The donation of gold is equal to the donation of thousand elephants. The donation of knowledge is equal to the donation of gold to thousand persons. The donation of land is ten million times far greater than the knowledge imparted to thousand disciples. The donation of a cow is equal to the donation of a land to thousand persons.[9] Cows are the children of Sun. Gold is produced from Fire. Earth belongs to Lord Viṣṇu. Hence the person who donates these three will get the immense and infinite benefit of these three.[10] It should be mentioned that only Kapilās are offered to the priests during sacrifices as Dakṣinas. A person who donates Kapilā is sure to get the equal merit of donating a 1000 ordinary cows.[11] Yama says that a person is sure to acquire the reward equal to that of a cow donation by offering meal to a beggar after serving him properly. By the donation of cows, land, gold, houses etc., the merit which a scholar gets is the same as the result he gets by the donation of a light.[12] The person who peruses the glorification of the ceremony of Ekādaśī gets the result equal to that of a donation of thousand cows.[13] If an unworthy person receives (when donated) either a cow or gold, clothes, meal, land, sesame, etc., he will be turned into ashes as a log;

i.e., the donation ruins the receiver.[14]

A distinction should not be made between the two Ekādaśi's of light fortnight and dark fortnight. As the milk of either a white cow or black cow is same, thus the two Ekādaśis cause equal result.[15] Cāturmāsya is considered to be the auspicious period of four months, i.e. from the Eleventh day of the light fortnight of the month of Aṣāḍa to the Eleventh day of the light fortnight of the month of Kārtīka. During this period the person who abstains from Ghee, would be born as a handsome person in the next birth.[16] One gets the world of Cows (Goloka) by refraining from taking curd and milk during the same period.[16a]

The cow world is considered to be the highest and the greatest of all worlds and in another context it is stated that the cow world is above to the shrine of Lord Śiva.[17] Sri Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of that world. The persons of pure conduct and those who have bestowed cows upon the priests dwell there.[18] Surabhi the Sacred Mother of cow species was born in the Goloka. The story runs as follows : Once Lord Kṛṣṇa had a desire of drinking milk because of thirst. By his volition Surabhi sprang from the left part of his body. She would yield much milk. She was very much attractive and had a calf. The milk of Surabhi formed into a lake of milk which subsequently became the ocean of milk. Gradually many cows have sprung from her. Lord Kṛṣṇa worshipped all the cows with care.[19] So it is our duty to worship Surabhi through her progeny if not directly with scrupulous care. She fulfils all the desires of her devotees and she is more competent to bless her devotees with happiness, peace and prosperity.

She is described as pervading the entire world. Her four feet are considered to be the Vedas. Her udder is considered to be the oceans. The Sun and the Moon are her eyes. In all the hairs of her body deities reside. The mountains are existing in her horns. In her ears Lord Vāyu dwells. In her navel ambrosia exists. Her hoofs are considered to be the nether worlds. On her head Lord Śiva resides. In her dung Vasus reside. In her urine Kinnaras reside. She removes the distress of the entire world. Her constitution is Veda itself.[20] The sacrifices are sanctified only with the products that the cow yields. All the

deities are in the body of Viṣṇu. The cows have taken birth from Viṣṇu.[21]

Cows are the very kith and kin of people and people are the very kith and kin of cows So it is considered to be an empty house in which there is not even a single cow.[22] The exhaled air of cows causes much peace in a house.[23] One should not transgress the vow of truth even when one's life is at stake. But for the protection of cows and Brahmins one may tell a lie at times.[24] A person who wakes up early in the morning and goes round the cow gets the merit equal to that of going round the entire world. A person who goes round the cow with proper attention may be relieved from the sins committed in the past ten births.[24a] Using the dust trodden by the cow for adorning the forehead as Tilaka is as virtuous as bathing in a holy river. To protect a cow or a Brahmin and to prohibit conversions, even Brahmins and Vaiśyas also are directed to take up arms.

Whoever sacrifices his life for the sake of a cow when it is about to be killed by tigers, hunters, ruthless kings, will get the abode of Viṣṇu which is not attainable even by the sages. While a cow is being killed in a forest by vultures, or by tigers, if a person sees it and shows even the semblance of sympathy by saying 'Leave her' 'leave her' dwells in heaven.[25] One should not enter a cowpen with shoes. A person who attempts to cultivate a land which is earmarked for grazing the cows will wallow in the hell for a period of 14 manu ages. The presence of cows may remove the defects of the soil.

From Āyurveda we know the utility of cow-urine. Without the application of Pañca Gavya the medicines cannot be purified. Cow urine is the best of all purifiers. Bathing in the urine of a kapilā is as good as bathing in a holy river. Cow dung acts as a medicine for the mortal bodies. It can destroy Bacteria. It may be applied as a manure for the lands for more crops. The Goddess of fortune resides in the cow dung.[26] A person who takes the five commodities belonging to cow namely milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung after fasting properly may be redeemed from all his sins.[27] The ground applied by the cow dung is considered to be holiest. The ash of the burnt cow dung redeems all sins. Of all holy places the cowpen is considered to be the holiest. One should worship and go round the cows. A person

who is suffering from diabetes may be relieved from his disease while spending and roaming along with the cows.

The sentiments of the Hindus are hurt if the cows are obstructed from grazing and the calves from sucking milk from the mother cow. Whoever strikes or kicks by his feet, a Teacher, Fire, Brahmin, Cow, deities and Kings, will have his feet completely burnt.[28] A person who offers to a cow the meal just sufficient for a man every day performs the vow which is called Gavāhnika. Holy persons should forsake enmity towards deities, Cows and Brahmins. One should not behave in a way contrary to the Vedic Code.[29] Whoever digs even a small pit just sufficient for a cow to quench her thirst, verily goes to heaven without ever seeing the Hades.[30] They are sure to go to Heaven, who offer fodder to cows; who serve cows and who never mount upon the back of cows.[31] Whoever constructs abbeys (convents), Cow-sheds, travellers bungalows, and shelters to the poor, the orphans, Brahmin's, etc., is sure to go to heaven.[32]

The sale of cows is prohibited. He who sells a cow may be considered a heinous person who is prepared to sell his own mother.[33] A person who steals cows would be born as a blind man. A person who kills a cow becomes a ghost[34] and he has to experience 21 kinds of hells.[35]

Cow slaughter is prohibited, as stated in the Śṛti. In the Mahābhārata the cow referred to as the mother, and the bull the father.[36] In another context it is stated in the Śāntiparva 'AGHNYĀ iti gavām nāma ka etā hantumarhati mahaccakārākuśalam gāmṛṣam vālmettu yaḥ' (the cow is referred to as 'Aghnyā'—ought not to be killed—as such who can even so much as think of killing a cow!). He who kills a cow or a bull commits a great sin.[37]

The study of the importance of cow implies the study of the importance of the ox and the bull too. In the Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa it is stated that Dharma was born to Surabhi in the form of Vṛṣabha which was taken as the banner of his flag by Lord Śiva.[38] 'Dharmo Vrṣabha rūpeṇa Mahādeva Dhvajaḥ Smṛtaḥ'. It is revolting to the sentiments of the Hindus to yoke the cows for tilling the lands. But the oxen are used to till the lands and help bring food for the humanity. The progeny of the cows is kept up by bulls and as much they too are objects of veneration and piety

No wonder the bull is the mount of Maheśwara. It is considered to be an act of piety if an ox is not castrated but reared to be a bull. Rearing up of a bull and setting it free to go about unfettered is called Vṛṣotsarjana—a holy religious rite. Eating beef is the most heinous, sinful and irriligious act according to traditional convention and belief of the Orthodox Hindus.

"While waiting at our door, if lo
One single guest without his meal should go;
Then taking food is taking beef
And taking water, taking wine in brief."[39]

In the Atharvaveda it is stated "The animal is happy when it is bestowed upon the priests, but happier is the cow when she is made a sacrifice to Gods."[40]

The killing of cows at sacrifices is not considered as sin as the violence contemplated or directed by the Veda is not sinful.[41]

'Yā Veda Vihitā himsā na sā himsāsti doṣadā'

Gomedha, the cow sacrifice, is described in the Atharva Veda lucidly. The barren cow (Vandhyā) is known as 'Śataudana gauḥ'.[42] By strangling her to death and offering her flesh etc., as oblation to deities is more meritorious even than the very performance of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra.

There the victim is addressed as 'Goddess' which will be protected by deities. He who sacrifices her, who kills her in the sacrifice, offers her limbs etc., as oblation, all are sure to reside in heaven. As such, "Gomedha" is praised in extenso. After sacrifice, the cow gets divinity and unites with deities.

The Bull-sacrifice is also described in a separate hymn.[43] It is meant for propitiating Indra. A white bull is sacrificed for appeasing Indra. But in the Kaliage the performance of such sacrifices is prohibited.[44]

Even though it is accepted that the cows were killed in the sacrifices, taking beef is considered to be sinful. 'If in one's home one cooks the cow—sacrificed or not—one is the wronger of Gods and Brahmins; he departs, dishonest from the world.'[45]

Even in the Ṛgveda she is described[46] as "The mother of

Rudras". "The very fountain of Ambrosia" and with such allied epithets. The vedic seer says, 'I exhort vociferously that the enlightened should not kill the cow—the pious descendent of Aditi.' In the Skānda Purāṇa, she is glorified in affectionate terms thus "O! Mother ! you are the primeval cause for this entire Creation, prosperity and destruction and you only are by your nectareous sentiments satisfying all the human beings as well paternal deities."[47]

On the southern bank of river Narmada, there is a sacred place named "Gopāreśwara Tīrtha". Once Kāmadhenu performed penance for propitiating Īswara, who at last manifested himelf from her body. When asked for a boon, Kāmadhenu desired that Lord Īswara should reside in that sacred place for the benefit of the people and accordingly the said boon was granted to her. Hence, that place came to be known as Gopāreśwara Tīrtha, capable of sanctifying even grave sinners.[48]

There are many rivers in the name of cows, river Nandā etc. Of all holy places Go-tirtha is the greatest.[49] It can redeem even the greatest sin. It is near the noble Kaśyapa-lake. It is beyond doubt that by taking a dip in these holy waters all sins can be cleansed. Taking a dip in the holy waters of Go-tīrtha, offering fodder to the cows, getting the favour of cow-mothers, absolves one from the filial debt owed to maternity.

Similarly there are many rivers named after the products of cows viz., Ghṛta tīrtha[49a] and Dugdha Kuṇḍa[50] are described in the Skānda Purāṇa. It is stated that a person after having bathed in the Ghṛta Tīrtha should consecrate Śiva with ghee.

Since the Vedic times the cow has been serving mankind in several ways. The usefulness of cow is apparent, as the giver of milk, the producer of bullocks, the giver of manure to our fields and even after death the giver of hide and bone. Of late our economists and agriculturists are realising the superiority of bullocks to the engine for ploughing the fields. Gandhiji and S.C.D. Gupta collected experts' opinions and elaborately demonstrated and proved the superiority of cow milk to buffalo milk. Now-a-days the Gobargas plant has to play a prominent role. This may enable to solve two main

problems relating to food and fuel.

The thesis proposes to discuss the several aspects of cow and cow-rearing from the Vedic times down to the modern age. The origin, varieties, economics, sacrifices, gift, goloka, medicinal values, sanctity, service and protection of cows, stories and holy places having a bearing on the cow, all are discussed in detail.

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4. P.P. (Srsti), Chapter 45 verse 70.
5. A.V., 12-4-20.
6. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 78 verses 11 and 12, and
   A.P., Chapter 211 verse 1, and
   V.D.P., Chapter 306 verse 22.
7. P.P. Uttara, Chapters 198 and 199.
8. A.V., 12-4-35 and 36.
9. P.P. Uttara, Chapter 120 verses 11 to 13, and
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13. *Ibid.*, Chapter 35 verse 116.
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15. *Ibid.*, Chapter 62 verses 49 and 50 and 51.
16. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 21.

16a. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 27.

17. S.P. Part 4, Chapter 2 verse 91, page 169.
18. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 81 verses 17 and 18.
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30. *Ibid.*, Chapter 243 verse 93.
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34. S.P. Prabhasa, Chapter 223 verse 46.
35. V.D.P., Chapter 42 verse 25.
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38. V.D.P. Part 3, Chapter 306 verse 27.
39. Sanskrit Subhashitas in English verse, page 60.
40. A.V., 12-4-40.
41. S.P. Part 2 (9), Chapter 9 verse 14.
42. A.V., 10-9.
43. A.V., 9-4.
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45. A.V., 12-4-53.
46. *Mātā Rudrāṇām Duhitā Vasunām*
    Svasādityānām Amṛtasya nābhiḥ
    Pranuvocam Cikituṣe Janāya
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50. S.P. Part 5, Chapter 54 verses 28 to 30.

2

Origin of the Cow

In the Sanskrit literature the concept of the word Cow (Gauḥ) has different connotations. In the Sanskrit lexicon 'Amarakośa', different meanings are attributed to the word 'Cow' viz., Heaven, Arrow, Animal, Speech, Indra's Weapon, Quarter, Eye, Ray, Earth and Water.[1]

The earliest occurrence of the word in the sense of Cow is in the Ṛgveda. The word 'Cow' occurs for the first time in the Maṇḍala II.[2] The family books from II to VII are considered to be the oldest portions of the Ṛgveda.

The word also occurs in Maṇḍala I.[3] There Indra is invoked and compared to a good milch cow (Sudughā). In the II Maṇḍala Agni is praised for a graceful reward of cows and steeds through his princely worshippers.

Soma is said to have generated the cows in the beginning.[4] Indra discovered the cows hidden in the cave.[5] Another version of Ṛgveda also echoes the same.[6]

It is noteworthy that one of the verses relates to an old fact which probably passed in the later period of Ṛgvedic times viz., that it was the Aṅgīrasas[7] who created the cow in this world by penance.

Sons of Sudhanvan are described as the creators of a cow by virtue of the talents they possessed.[8]

The origin of the cow is entirely for the purpose of sacrifice. It is stated in the Taitittrīya Saṁhitā as follows[9]: Manu desired

what of earth was sacrificial. He found the poured out ghee. He said 'who is able to produce this also at the sacrifice ?' Mitra and Varuṇa said 'we are able to produce the cow'. Then they set the cow in motion. Wherever she stepped, there ghee was pressed out; therefore she is called Ghee-footed, that is her origin.

In the Brāhmaṇas there are many versions relating to creation. A version[10] will show how the origin of cow has taken place along with the daily sacrifice, i.e. Fire Sacrifice which is considered one of the most important sacrifices.

In the beginning only Prajāpati was there. He considered 'how may I be reproduced ?' He toiled and performed acts of penance. He produced Agni from his mouth, therefore Agni is a consumer of food. He thus generated him first (Agre) of the Gods, and therefore he is called Agni, for the name Agni is really speaking Agri. Prajāpati then considered in that Agni. 'I have produced a food consumer for myself but in deed, there is no other food here than myself whom verily he would not eat!' At the time this earth was quite bare, there existed neither plants nor trees. For this Prajāpati was troubled. Thereupon, Agni turned towards Prajāpati with open mouth, and the latter being terrified, became bereft of his own greatness. His own greatness is his speech. He desired an offering for himself. He rubbed his hands and because of it obtained both butter offering and milk offering both indeed being milk. This offering however did not satisfy him. He poured it away into the fire. From it plants sprang. He rubbed his hands a second time and thereby obtained another offering either a butter offering or a milk offering. But both are indeed milk. By this offering he became satisfied. He doubted 'Shall I offer it up? Shall I not offer it up?' Both ways he thought over. His own greatness said to him, 'Offer it up'. Prajāpati was aware that it was his own (Sva) greatness that had spoken to him and so offered it up with a 'Svāhā'. Then that burning one sun rose, and that blowing one, wind, sprang up whereupon indeed Agni turned away and Prajāpati having performed offering reproduced himself and saved himself from Agni. Death, as he was about to consume Prajāpati. And he who having knowledge of this offers the Fire Sacrifice on the one hand propagates his species

by means of descendants as Prajāpati did and on the other saves himself from Agni, from death, when the latter is about to consume him. And when he dies and he is laid upon the pyre, he is born again out of the fire, the fire only consumes his body. And as if he were born of the fire, he takes his rebirth. He however who does not offer the fire sacrifice, never again springs to new life. Therefore, one must of necessity offer the fire sacrifice.

Having offered he rubbed his hands again. Thence a 'Vikanṭaka' tree sprang forth, and therefore that tree is suitable for the sacrifice and proper for sacrificial vessels. Thereupon three heroes among the Gods were born viz., Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya; and verily whosoever thus knows those heroes among the gods, to him a hero shall be born. They then said "we came after our father Prajāpati, let us then create what shall come after us!" Having enclosed a piece of ground they sang praises with the Gāyatri Stanza without the 'him' and that (with which they enclosed was the ocean and this earth was the praising ground (Āstāra)). When they had sung praises they went out towards the East saying 'will I go back thither!' The Gods came upon a cow which had sprung into existence. Looking up at them, she uttered the sound 'him'. The Gods perceived that this was the 'him' of the sāman (melodious sacrificial chant) for heretofore (their song was) without the 'him' but after that it was the real sāman. The sāman was in the cow; therefore the latter affords the means of subsistence and so does he afford the means of subsistence whosoever thus knows that 'him' of the sāman in the cow.

They said 'auspicious indeed is what we have produced here'. We have produced the cow, for truly, she is the sacrifice and and without her no sacrifice is performed. She is also the food, for the cow indeed is all food. This word (go) then is a name of these cows, and so it is of the sacrifice, let him therefore repeat it, as it were, saying 'Good Excellent' and verily whosoever knowing this repeats it, with him those cows multiply, and the sacrifice will incline to him.

This cow, however, Agni coveted, thinking, 'I would like to mate with her'. He united with her and his seed became her milk. Therefore, the latter is cooked, while the cow is raw, for

the milk is Agni's seed and therefore it is that milk whether it is in a black cow or a red cow, is always white and shining like fire, because it is Agni's seed. And therefore, it is warm already at the milking, for it is the seed of Agni.

Again elsewhere the same Brāhmaṇa[11] says Prajāpati creates animals out of his vital organs out of his mind he created man, out of his eye the horse, out of his breath the cow, out of his ear the sheep, out of his voice the goat.

According to Atharvaveda there are two versions relating to the origin of the cow. The first version describes the cow as the daughter of Kāma.[12] Kāmadhuk or Kāmadhenu the cow of Plenty that yields everything that is desired.[12a] According to the second version[13] the deities begged the cow, using the Brahmins as their mouth. The cow is produced for gods and Brahmins when she first sprang to life.

According to the Mahābhārata[14] Surabhi sprang from the sea along with Pārijāta, both are wish-yielders. Goddess of Fortune, Surā and Soma and the Horse Manojava are all produced from the sea.

There are two different versions also relating to the origin of Surabhi.

According to one[15] Surabhi was the daughter of Dakṣa. She gave birth to Nandnī by her connection with Kaśyapa. Nandinī took the form of a cow for the welfare of the world. She was capable of granting all that is desired by one. The meritorious son of Varuṇa who was called Vasiṣṭha, the sage, who afterwards became famous as Āpava, obtained Nandinī for his sacrificial rites.

Another version[16] follows next. At the time of creation, the means of support came first, creatures next. As soon as the creatures were born, they began to cry loudly for their food. Then all the creatures came to the creator who was responsible to give them food, like children coming near to their father or mother. Knowing the intention which moved all his creatures, the holy Lord of all creatures, viz, Dakṣa, whom previously Brahman commanded to create living creatures, for the sake of the beings he had created himself, drank a quantity of nectar. He became gratified with the nectar, he quaffed and then a belching came out, spreading an excellent fragrance all around. As a

result of that belching Dakṣa saw that it gave birth to a cow which became famous later. Thus, this, Surabhi was the daughter of Dakṣa as it had sprung from his mouth. The venerated Surabhi gave birth to a number of daughters, who came to be esteemed as the mothers of the world. Their complexion was like that of gold.

According to the Padmapurāṇa[17] five holy cows were produced while the great ocean was being churned. They are Nandā, Subhadrā, Surabhi, Suseela and Sumanā respectively.[17a]

The Padma Purāṇa[18] elevates the cow and speaks of her origin along with the Veda. It is stated that a radiance first came out of the Creator's face and later it was split into four parts viz., The Vedas, The Fire, The Cow and The Brahmin.

In another Purāṇa[19] also there is the description of like nature as in the Mahābhārata. In days of yore to obtain nectar gods and demons churned the Kalaśa-sea using the Manthara mountain as churn-stick and Vāsuki as rope. From the sea, they obtained first three gems. They were offered to Brahman. Two other gems produced from the sea were offered to Viṣṇu and Śaṅkara, the first being the well-known Kaustubha. Next Pārijāta was taken by all the gods and was planted in the Nandana Garden. After Pārijāta there arose from the sea Surabhi, with her calf and went straightaway into the region of cows through the sky.

According to the Bhāgavata[20] the ocean (Mahodadhi) was churned and there arose dreadful poison and it was taken by Lord Īśwara. Then Havirdhānī, the cow useful for the purpose of fire sacrifice, came out. The sages who knew the reality of Brahman took the cow so as to reach the abode of Brahman after performing Fire Sacrifices.

According to Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa[21] the origin of Surabhi, the mother of the bovine species is described in the following manner: Surabhi the sacred mother of cows born in the Goloka. The story runs that once Lord Kṛṣṇa had a desire for drinking milk because he was thirst. By his volition Surabhi sprang from the left part of his body. She would yield much milk. She was very much attractive and had a calf too. The milk of Surabhi formed into a lake. Gradually many cows sprang from her. Lord Kṛṣṇa worshipped all the cows with care. Rādhā is

described as the dearest friend of Surabhi.

Though the lineage of cow is not described in extenso anywhere, the Ṛgveda indirectly suggests the lineage of cow in the following verse:

Mātā Rudrāṇam Duhitā Vasūnām
Svasādityānām Amṛtasya nābhiḥ
Praṇuvocam Cikituṣe Janāya
Māgāmanāgāmaditiṁ Vadhiṣṭhā

Ṛgveda VIII.101.15.

She is described as the sister of Ādityas, daughter of Vasūs and the mother of Rudrās. How did the Vasūs get the cow and the Ādityas as their progeny and later how did the cow give birth to the Rudras ? This is not explained in the Ṛgveda. But a clear description which will have a bearing on this verse and the lineage of the cow is narrated in the following way in the Agnipurāṇa.[22]

Vena's son Pṛthu performed the Rāja Sūya Sacrifice as a result of which he got Sūta and Magadha as his sons. They praised him with verses composed by them. He got the appellation of Rājā by pleasing his subjects. Pṛthu had two pious sons Antardhāna and Pāli. Antardhāna got a son named Havirdhāna who had six sons. The first son Prācīnabarhis had ten sons, they were all named Pracetases. They practised religious austerities for a long period stretching to ten thousand years. Having obtained the status of patriarche they pleased Viṣṇu when they came out of the sky overspread with trees and burnt them down by the fire and wind produced from their mouths. Beholding the trees destroyed by them, Soma the King of plants approached those patriarchs and said: 'Renounce your grief, I will bestow on you this most excellent maiden Mārisha begotten by the sage Kaṇḍu on (the nymph) Pramloca and nourished by me. Cognizant of the future, I created this wife for you capable of multiplying your family. She will give birth to Dakṣa who will multiply progeny.'

Prachetas accepted Mārisha and from her was born Dakṣa and the mobile and immobile creation, the bipeds and quad-

rupeds. The mind born Dakṣa afterwards procreated daughters. He conferred ten of them on Dharma, thirteen on Kaśyapa, twenty-six on Soma, four on Ariṣṭanemi, two on Vahputra and two on Aṅgīrasa. By mental intercourse they gave birth to Devās, Nāgās and others.

Kaśyapa begot on learned Surabhi eleven Rudras. The progeny of Kaśyapa from Aditi and others, the deities Tuṣitas of Cakṣuṣa (Manwantara) were again begotten by Kaśyapa on Aditi. They were born as the twelve Ādityas in the Vaivaśwatamanwantara viz., Viṣṇu, Śakra, Twaṣṭr, Dhāta, Āryama, Pūṣan, Vivaswan, Savita, Mitra, Varuṇa, Bhaga and Aṁsu. Surabhi gave birth to cows and buffaloes.[23]

Varieties of Cow

Surabhi is the mother of the bovine species. Cows and bulls are her progeny. There are many varieties of cows.

Synonyms of the word Cow : Usrā[24] Usriyā,[25] Dughā,[26] Dhenā[27] and Dhenu[28] are the synonyms of 'GO' (Cow) in Vedic Literature. Māheyī, Saurabheyī, Gauḥ, Usrā, Mahā, Sṛṅgiṇī, Arjunī, Aghnyā, and Rohiṇī are the synonyms in classical literature.[29] The cow-herd (the herd of cows) is referred to as 'Gokulam' or 'Godhanam'.[30] The best type of cow is 'Naiciki'.[31]

The Cow in different ages-stages etc. The calf (just born) is known as Tarṇaka. For a calf of less than one year, the attribute is 'Śakṛtkari'.[32] One-year-old cow is referred to as Ekahāyanī, while the two-year-old one is referred to as Dvihāyanī,[33] the three-year-old one as Trihāyanī and the four-year-old one as Caturhāyanī and so on.

A barren cow is known as 'Vaśā'. 'Apatokā' is the type of a cow which slips a calf; 'Sandhinī' is the name attributed to a cow which is suited by a bull;[34] 'Vehat' is the name given to a cow which slips a calf due to the bull's union, 'Upasaryā' is the name of a young-cow in heat; 'Prasṭhauhī' is the name attached to a cow which is impregnated for the first time;[35] 'Acandi' is the name of an easily amenable (pussillanimous) cow; 'Bahusūtiḥ' is the name of a cow which calved many times; 'Baṣkayanī' is the name of a cow which has a full grown-calf (having

calved long back); 'Dhenu' is the name of a milch cow which has calved recently and which is in milk;[36] 'Suvratā' is the name of a cow which is milked easily; 'Pinodhii' is the name of a cow which has large udders; 'Droṇakṣīra' is the name of a cow which yields plenty of milk[37] (droṇās of milk); 'Samāṁsamīnā' is the name of a cow which calves annually.[38]

Cow

The sacrificial cows are referred to with many epithets viz., 'Idā'[39] 'ADITI'[40] (inviolable-unrestrained) and 'SARASVATI.[41] Since the cows are the conductresses of sacrifices performed to propitiate the deities, they are also referred to as 'DEVAYĀNA'[42] (conductresses). Again 'Sabardughā' is the general term with which the cow in milk is referred to when it yields nectareous milk for the performance of sacrifices.[43]

Pravargya is a preparatory rite of the Soma-sacrifice in which the Adhvaryu offers an oblation of clarified butter mixed with the milk of cow. This oblation is called Gharma while the cow from which the milk is taken for this purpose is known as Gharmadhuk.[44]

In a verse[45] all the sacrificial names of the cow are referred to while addressing the cow itself—IDĀ, RANTÉ (delightful), HAVYÉ (Worshipful), KĀMYE (Lovable), CANDRÉ (Splendid), JYOTÉ (Shining), ADITÉ (Inviolable), SARASVATI (Full of sap), MAHI (Mighty), VIŚṚTE (most renowned)—these are the epithets attributed to the cow affectionately.

Similar nomenclatures are found elsewhere[46] too—Idē, Rantē, Aditē, Sarasvatī, Preyasī, Mahi Viśṛtyetanite, Aghniye etc.

Vasūni[47] (Wealthy ones) is used to refer to cows rich in milk. Gṛṣṭi[48] is the name of the cow that has calved for the first time. Vāsitā[49] denotes a cow desiring a bull, Stāri[50] a barren cow, Vehat[51] a cow that has slipped a calf, Vaśā[52] a barren cow which was sacrificed generally. In certain passages the term Vaśā is used to denote a mere Cow.

Different Colours of Cows[53]

1. Kapilā (Tawny)

2. Lohitā (Red)
3. Śabalā (Variegated)
4. Śvetā (White)
5. Kṛṣṇā (Black)
6. Dhūmrā (Smoky coloured)
7. Phenasayarṇā (Water foam coloured)
8. Vātarenusavarṇā (Colour of the dust raised by the wind)
9. Hiraṇyavarṇa Piṅgākṣī (Golden colour and eyes of Reddish-brown)
10. Palaladhumra Varṇā (Colour of smoke raised from the burnt straw)
11. Pīvarī (Strong, having a fleshy throat)
12. Gowrī (Yellowish)
13. Pāṇḍu Kaṁbalavarṇā (Colour of white blanket)

Categories of Kapilā[54]

1.	Svarṇa Kapilā	—	Golden Complexion
2.	Gaurapiṅgalā	—	Admixture of light reddish brown
3.	Raktapiṅgākṣī	—	Reddish brown eyed
4.	Gala Piṅgalā	—	Reddish brown necked
5.	Babhṛ	—	Dark brown
6.	Śveta Piṅgala	—	Light brown
7.	Rakta Piṅgākṣī	—	Reddish brown eyed
8.	Khurapiṅgalā	—	Having hoofs of red complexion
9.	Pāṭalā	—	Pale red
10.	Puchcha Piṅgalā	—	Tail of red complexion

Substitutes of Cows for the purposes of Donation[55]

1.	Ghṛtadhenu	—	Clarified butter cow
2.	Tiladhenu	—	Sesame-Cow
3.	Jaladhenu	—	Water-Cow

Synonyms of Bull

Usra,[56] Usrika,[57] Usriya,[58] Ṛṣabha[59] are the synonyms of bull in the Vedic literature. The last is the common name of the bull. Ukṣa, Bhadraḥ, Balīvarda, Ṛṣabha Vṛṣabha, Vṛṣa, Anadvān, Saurabheya and Go are the synonyms in classical literature. The herd of bulls is known as 'Aukṣakam'[60]. 'Mahokṣa' is the name of a great vigorous bull. The calf is known as 'Vatsa' and the group of calves is termed as 'Vatsakam'. An old ox is called 'Vṛddhokṣa'. Damya or Vatsatara is the name of an ox just fit for both draught and ploughing purpose.[61] Ārṣabhyaḥ is the name of a bull which has reached the age of maturity and fit for breeding purpose to impregnate cows. Ṣaṇḍa is the name of a bull and Gopati and Itcara also denote the same. Praṣṭhavāt is the name of a young bull being trained for the plough.[62] Yugya is the name of an ox that is yoked first to the plough.[63] Dhūrvaha is the name of an ox which bears a cart or plough.[64] Ekadhurīṇa is the name of an ox which is useful either for draught purpose or ploughing purpose. Sarvadhurīṇa is the name attributed to an ox which is useful for both drought and ploughing purpose.[65]

Bull

Vaṁśaga is first mentioned in Ṛgveda being the common name of a bull.[66] The bull was regarded as the symbol of strength. Even gods were often called Vṛṣabha or Ṛṣabha. Maharṣabha denotes a great bull and the term finds place in Atharva Veda.

Oxen were used for drawing wagons which gave them their name Anadvāh (cart-drawing animal) and for ploughing. They were usually castrated for these twin purposes.[67] Vāha[68] is the name of ox used for drawing the plough. The varieties of bulls according to their age-group are classified as below.

Vatsa[69] (m) is often found in Vedic literature in the sense of calf (generally applicable to a calf of less than a year).

Dharuṇa[70] is the name attributed to a sucking calf, Tri-avi is the name adopted to refer to a calf of eighteen months,[71] Dityavāt refers to a bull-calf of 2 years,[72] Trivatsa a bull of three

years,[73] Turyavāh a bull of four years,[74] Ṣaṣṭavāha a bull of six years.[75]

Age-groupings

Tryavayaḥ	Oxen of eighteen months
Dityavāhaḥ	Oxen of two years
Pañcavayavaḥ	Oxen of two and half years
Trivatsāh	Oxen of 3 years
Turyavāḥ	Oxen of 4 years

All these five are mentioned in a verse.[76]

Assortments

Vairāṭapṛṣṭham	Refers to a bull having a high hump
Līlāṅga	Sportive and handsome
Dṛtikaṇṭham	A bull having pointed and fleshy throat hanging down.[77]

A variety of bull called Nīla is said to have the following charateristics. He is of red complexion, his face and tail are of pale white (Pāṇḍura) and the hoofs and horns are white in colour. Such a bull is the very embodiment of Dharma.[78]

Another variety is also there known is Nīla and the characteristics of the same are set down as given below. A bull whose feet are of the complexion of blue and red, whose hoofs are tawny (Kapilā) also may be regarded as Nīla and is the very representative of Śiva.[79]

He who behaves sinfully regarding Nīla is sure to suffer in the hell, Raurava and he is called as Vṛṣala. That one who performs the marriage of Nīla for the gratification of paternal deities are exempted from the visit of the dreadful hell along with his generations.[80]

Origin of Nila[81]

Once Śiva was cursed by some sages. As a result his body was defiled. Then he praised Surabhi and entered her body and

disappeared. She bore him in her womb. After sometime he took birth as her son by name Nīla. When the sages would not find out the whereabouts of Īśwara, after searching for him at last they asked the deities about him. Then the deities took the sages to the Goloka through the spiritual path and showed the son of Surabhi to the latter. They saw the illustrious bull form of Īśwara by name Nīla, who was with the resplendence of the Sun. The illustrious Nīla was running in the midst of the cows, consisting Nandā, Sumanasā, Surūpā, Suśilakā, Kāminī, Nandinī, Medhyā, Hiraṇyadā, Dhanadā, Dharmadā, Narmadā, Sakala Priyā, Vāmanā, Laṁbikā, Kṛṣṇā, Dīrgha Sṛṅgā, Supuchhikā, Tārā, Tāreyikā, Śāntā, Durviṣahyā, Manoramā, Sunāsā, Dīrghanāsā, Gowrā, Gowramukhī, Hāsā, Haridra, Vāmā, Nīla, Saṅkhinī, Pañca Varṇikā, Vinatā, Bhinatā, Supatrikā, Jayā, Aruṇā, Kuṇḍoghnī, Sudantī, Cāruchampakā. Both the sages and deities felt much satiety after seeing him. They were very much impressed at the glorious splendour of the form of Nīla. Indra along with the other deities and sages glorified him.

One view is that milking breeds of cattle of northern India were brought by the Āryans and they spread from Northwest to the Central and the Southern and the Western and the Eastern Regions of India gradually. Another view is that the breeds of the cattle in India are of indigenous origin.[82] It is a fact that the cow, the buffalo and the elephant were domesticated in India long before 3,000 B.C. and in the Pre-Āryan days the massive, long horned and humped form and a small form with short horns (humpless) were found in India, the latter type in the upper strata of Moheñjadāro site. Since there are abundant remains of humped bulls in every stratum, it goes to indicate as Sir John Marshall quoted by Shirla puts it: 'The Indus Valley must have been especially rich in this fine breed of cattle, which is closely allied if not identical with the magnificent white and grey breed still common in Sindh, Northern Gujarat and Rajputhana but wholly different from the small humped cattle of Central India.'[83]

In fact, it may be that the cattle the Āryans are supposed to have brought with themselves were not suited to India. They might have brought in the 'Boz Taurus' species of North Asia from where they came and they ultimately found the indigenous

breeds better and adopted them.

The Ṛgveda describes that river Gomal—tributary of the Indus possesses kine, while Mathura, the land of Kṛṣna and his milk maids must, undoubtedly at one time have been famous for its milch cows. Huientsang writes of 'Numerous Oxen' in Parayātra (on Bairat) 'While the inhabitants of Sind supported themselves by rearing cattle...' Much later, Marco Polo came across the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf and found a type of cattle there unfamiliar to him, which he describes as '. . . a species of large white oxen, with smooth coats . . . horns thick and obtuse and having between the shoulders a gibbous rising or hump.' In Masulipatnam, the writer remarks 'they have cattle enough'. Nicolo Conti in 15th century described wild cattle with manes and long horns as still found in great abundance in the neighbourhood of Calicut . . . Abul Fazal wrote 'Every part of the Empire produces good oxen, but those of Gujarat are esteemed the best. There are also abundance of fine oxen in Bengal and the Deccan. In the neighbourhood of Kashmir are the Katras, of very extraordinary appearance besides small oxen called Gaynee well-limbed and very beautiful.'[84]

Cow-Breeds in India

Some of the best types of the several distinct breeds of cattle in India are discussed below:[85]

1. *Montgomery*

(Locally known as 'Shahiwal' or 'Teli'). In respect of Montgomery cows the height varies from 48 to 50 inches while that of the bulls from 52 to 58 inches. They are both symmetrical and beautiful. The cows have well-shaped, fairly large and regular teats. Their milk yield ranges between twenty to thirty-two pounds a day, when in full milk. They yield milk for ten to thirteen months. Exceptional cows of this variety, however, continue yielding milk even still further than that duration.

2. *Sind Cattle*

The Sind Cattle are akin in almost all respects to Montgomery in Lower Sind, viz., in regard to size, colour and looks and also in milk-yield. Both Montgomery and Sind Cows are high-price fetching ones and are considered as the most valuable breeds of milch cows in India, as they stand second to none in their milk yield. There is a belief that these two varieties are the product of cross-breeding of Indian with English short-horn or red-polled breeds. The butter fat content is about 7 per cent in their milk.

3. *Hansi or Hissar*

The cows in these two districts in Haryana (Punjab) are noted for good milk yield upto thirty pounds per day.

4. *Nagaur*

The cows of Nagaur (Bikaner-Rajputana) were once the pride of Delhi and were largely seen there and also in the North-West and Central Provinces of India. They are gentle by nature and capable of good milk yield between 20 and 30 pounds a day. The bullocks are very much prized. They are used by Indian gentlemen for drawing their carriages. Some of them are very tall and narrow—the tallest measuring 64 inches. They are noted for their trotting, they being capable of keeping pace even with the horse. However, they are not able to draw heavy loads.

5. *Nellore/Ongole*

The Nellore and Ongole breeds have long been regarded for their milking qualities of the cows and strength and spirit of endurance of the bullocks. They are capable of fetching fancy prices. A pair of bullocks draw thirty maunds load in a cart. They are excellent for ploughing.

6. *Gir (Kuttywar)*

These are seen in Bombay Presidency. They are medium in height, good in form and substance. The cows give sixteen to twenty-four pounds of milk a day. They have however smaller horns but larger ears than the Hansi. They do not have very large humps. They are considered as the best milk breed in the Presidency of Bombay. The bullocks besides being large, very strong and heavy and are good at plough and drawing loads.

7. *Kankreji (Gujarathi)*

This again forms another type of good breed in the Bombay State. They are tall, active and docile. The bullocks are used for drawing carts and for tilling the soil. Milk-yield from the cows is appreciably high and in one lactation 4,000 pounds can be expected from good milkers. The noted types in the State of Bombay are Kankreji and Gir. Gujarathi is another name for Kankreji. In Gujarat the most common ones are the result of cross between Gir and other breeds.

8. *Goorgaira*

This is another good breed found in Mooltan district. These cows have all the attributes of the Hissar type. Some of the best ones have black points. A cow yields between 16 and 20 pounds of milk a day. Goorgaira is almost a prototype of Montgomery bulls and cows.

9. *Mooltan & Amritsar Cows*

Many of them are very good milkers. They are hardy and healthy. Given proper care they respond well.

10. *Krishna Valley Cattle*

These are medium in size and are well-built. Though the bullocks are good at work the cows are not good at yield of milk.

11. *Kangayam*

They are either large or small in size, and are found in Kangayam (South India). The large variety are fairly good milkers.

12. *Mysore Bullocks*

Amrit Mahal breed of Mysore stand out as excellent bullocks. The cows are not good milkers. The average milk yield per day ranges round 4-6 pounds. The bullocks are generally grey or dark while the cows are white in colour. The bullocks are strong and capable of endurance.

13. *Dhanni Cattle* (*Pothwar/Nukra*)

These are found in Jhelum, Attock and Rawalpindi districts. The bullocks are sturdy and enduring and with the exception of a few the cows are not good milkers.

14. *Awankari Breed*

This beautiful breed is found in North Punjab, and the cows are good milkers while the bullocks are well proportioned and strong.

15. *Bengali Cattle*

There is no special breed of good cattle worth the name in Bengal. The best specimens are the products of cross-breed with native cows and Hissar/Montgomery/Shahabad bulls. Some Zamindars have imported a few pure-bred or hybrid bulls for being let loose as Brāhmaṇi bulls, to serve the needs of the cows in the vicinity. Little care is however taken by the villagers to have improvement in their cattle breeding.

In Calcutta very few thorough-bred bulls and large number of half-bred bulls are kept for breeding purposes. Cross between the better class country cows and thorough-bred Hansi/Montgomery bulls produces good variety of bullocks for plough and cart in Bengal. From Shahabad a considerable number of bullocks are

being imported. All over Bengal one can see cross-bred cows, some proving excellent milkers for their size and are more hardy than even the pure ones. They are cheaper than the cows of pure blood. A half-bred Bengali cow gives 10-16 pounds of milk per day. The ordinary Bengali cattle are very small and weak too, measuring about 32-40 inches in height. The bullocks are not good at draught or cart. The cows are very poor milkers.

16. *Bihar Cattle*

The best of this variety is found in the Shahabad district. Well-developed udders with properly separated teats and distinct prominent milk veins are the main features of this breed. They have a well-bred appearance. The milk yield ranges between twelve and sixteen pounds a day. The bullocks are useful for both carriages and plough. Best results are obtained by allowing good bulls of this breed with small Bengali cows.

Though crossbred cows are common in Bihar some European planters and rich landlords have imported English, Montogomery and Hissar bulls to improve the cattle of their locality.

17. *Bhagalpore Cattle*

These cattle have not been noted for anything, the cows being poor milkers and the bullocks being usually leggy and flat-sided.

18. *Darjeeling*

This variety may either be indigenous breed or the result of cross between the native cows and English bulls. Some look so much as English ones while others like wild cattle. Of course some of them are exceedingly handsome. The bullocks are sturdy and strong. The cows yield about 12 pounds milk per day.

19. *Patna Cattle*

In the Patna and Bankipore districts Taylor breed (cattle after

the Commissioner of the district who imported some Australian bulls to cross with native cows) are noted for their good yield of milk, say between 24 to 36 pounds a day. The bullocks are not considered good at work they being neither strong or large. The cows of this type can also be seen in other parts of India though they are not much favoured by Indians. Since Australian cattle and English cattle are not able to withstand the heat and damp in India, they prove a failure. However crossbred English cows are found all over India especially in Madras, parts of Bombay, the North-west Provinces and the Punjab. Cross-bred cows (Montgomery bulls and class Bengali cows) are capable of yielding 16 pounds of milk daily but in the second cross they stand for twenty pounds of milk a day.

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3

Economics of the Cow

India's cow-centred economy is indissolubly and inextricably linked with the preservation, protection and progress of cows and the culture and the religious outlook of Indians to a certain degree. Hence the cow occupies a conspicuous position of veneration in the social life of India.[1]

Even from the Pre-Vedic period, cows were a valuable asset to the Āryans. In the Ṛgvedic times and before, cattle-rearing and hunting were said to be the predominant occupation of the primitive races.[2] The milk and meat of the cattle like cows, buffaloes and goats were their main sustenance. They led care-free and comfortable lives by hunting for meat and rearing cattle for milk. Gradually, the possession of cattle as property gained ground, and became an inevitable asset. Consequently there was a check on their nomadic habits.

Ploughing was practised even before Ṛgvedic times, and every family used to own lands for cultivation. The modern Indian plough yoked by a pair of oxen is only a replica of the time-old Ṛgvedic practice.[3] Sometimes a pair of horses were serviced. Plough is referred to in Ṛgveda as 'Sira'[4] and Lāṅgala[5]. Pṛthu the son of Vena is accredited as the inventor of plough and tilling.[6]

Milk and its Various Preparations

In the Vedic times, Milk and the various preparations with milk

came into use, as food. Every family owned a herd of cows and even sages earnestly craved for the gift of cows. That the Vedic Āryans were enamoured of milk, especially cow's milk cannot be gainsaid. In the Ṛgveda milk is referred to as 'Payas'.

Kṣhīraudanam was a favourite relishing food of the day and hence it must be inferred that each and every family must have had milch cows and grain. Dadhi (sour milk/curd) is an admixture of Soma, Dadhyāśir an epithet of Soma in the Ṛgveda.[7] Butter– a product got by churning. Ghṛta, (malt) required for their daily use. Ghṛta is considered as the semblance of Ambrosia[8] 'Amṛtasya cakṣaṇam'. Milk was used for daily household consumption and for offering libations to the sacred fire and for performance of annual and periodical Satras in order to have copious rains for the rich growth of crops. Thus it will be seen that cattle-yearning had a place in those days and one's richness was adjudged by the number of cattle owned by him. Even kings used to possess herds of cattle as their personal property and bestowed large gifts of cattle on the learned Ṛṣis and the singers (poets).[9] Thieves and robbers waited for opportunities to raid as many cattle as possible. Possession of cattle was the fashion of the day in the Ṛgvedic Āryan times, and prayers were offered to Gods for the gifts of cattle.[10] Greed for possession of cattle made the Ṛgvedic Āryans to raid for cattle and to pray Pūṣan to grant them success.[11]

Instances are not wanting when Asuras (Paṇis), the soldiers of Vala—had stolen the cows of Gods or as referred to in a legend of Agnīrasas and concealed them in a cave where they were discovered by Indra with the help of the bitch Sarama.[12]

Cattle formed perhaps the only wealth of the Ṛgvedic Āryans of Neolithic-age other than their agricultural products. Kine were used for being given in exchange (barter)[13] for possession of agricultural lands, raiments, and other necessaries of their life.[14]

The word 'sale' had no place in Ṛgveda, though, of course the verb 'KRI' was used, to mean 'barter' in the narrowest sense. Only the milch cows are the means to serve as price (śulka) for the image of Indra[15] not any other thing, however abundant the measure be. The price was called Vasna, and the merchant Vaṇij.[16]

The Soma plant was purchased exchanging kine for a definite measure. Paśu (Cattle) was very dear even in the early Ṛgvedic Āryan-times. Even the savage and semi-savage Āryans that left for reasons of compulsions the Sapta-Sindhu for Western-Asia and Europe knew the value of cattle as a means of exchange. The ancient Romans use the word 'pecus' or 'Pecu' (Vedic Paśu) in terms of wealth or money.[17]

Hariścandra's son Rohita asked a poor Brahmin, Ajīgarta whose family famished with hunger, to part with one of his sons for one hundred cows, so that he may be his substitute at the sacrifice. Then Ajīgarta's second son was sold to Rohita for one hundred cows, and taken to the king as his vicarious offer to Varuṇa. Next to bind the victim to the sacrificial post, Ajīgarta demanded another hundred cows for the act and finally for the performance of the decapitation he demanded another one hundred cows.[18]

Macdonnel observes that cattle occupied the chief place, and the cows were the chief form of wealth. The sacrificial fee (Dakṣiṇā) is an epithet for 'right' (the latent meaning being 'GO' (COW).[19]

By the use of gold ornaments and jewellery came in the coinage. The word 'Niṣka' (necklet as per Ṛgveda) became the name of a coin gradually. Even when coins were invented as a medium of exchange, the original word 'pecus' or 'Pecu' (money meant by Romans and other races), were in use. Hence the words 'Pecuniary', 'impecunious' derived from the latin root 'Pecus' find place in English.[20]

The cows were valuable assets to the ancient Hindus even in the Sūtra period. Madhuparka Cows are used in connection with matrimony—one at the time of wedding and the other at Argha Ceremony.[21] The officiating priest (Ācārya) makes the bride and the groom step forward uttering the mantra[22] 'for sap with one step, for juice with two steps, for prosperity with three steps, for comfort with four steps, for cattle with five steps, for the seasons with six steps, friend be with seven steps'. In the Hiraṇyakeśin Gṛhyasūtra, these seven steps are attributed to have been taken for sap, juice, vows, comfort, cattle prosperity and seven-fold Hotṛship; all the time invoking Viṣṇu telling 'May Viṣṇu go after thee'. After the 7th step, the groom

murmurs to the bride that they have become friends inseparably. The bride gives the gift of a cow—the optional gift to be given by a Brahmin.[23] In the nuptial ceremony[24] (Garbhādhāna) just before and after cohabitation, the husband murmurs addressing the wife personified as a cow to beget a son from the sperm produced by the man and wife. This shows the important place of the cow as an indispensable link to Hindus. The craving for the well-bred cows is clearly brought out here.

In the seventh month when the lady is in the family way, the Simantonnayana[25] (parting of the hair) takes place when a bull is the fee for the sacrifice.[26]

Until Samāvartana (leave-taking ceremony at the end of studies) a scholar is not expected to offer anything to his teacher. During Samāvartana alone he is expected to offer in the form of fee with great reverence anything befitting his means.[27] Since the teacher's services to the student are invaluable and the remuneration is insignificant, the teachers naturally commanded utmost respect, awe and reverence. Whatever the measure of wealth one gives to the teacher, one cannot wipe off the debt he owes to one's teacher, whatever little the teacher teaches. The time-old gifts given to teachers are earth, gold, cow, horse, umbrella, shoes, clothes, fruits and vegetables. According to Vyāsa, only cows are the fitting fee to a teacher.[28]

Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra[29] prescribes that the upper-garment of a Brahmin should be the skin of an antelope, of a Kṣatriya that of a spotted deer, of a Vaiśya that of a goat or cow, and in their absence cow's hide for all the three, it being freely available in those days.

The staff carried by a student served the double purpose—to protect himself and also to tend the cattle,[30] since the teacher's herd had to be tended by the pupils.

The Keśānta[31] (consecrating the first shaving ceremony) is otherwise called 'Godāna' since the ceremony is followed by a gift of a cow or an ox to one's teacher.

In conjunction with the erection of the chief post during the house-construction process, the builder chants the mantra 'The branch of this tree that drops ghee is erected in the immortal';

the child the young one cries to it, cows shall flock to it, unceasingly fertile ones.[32] Even on minor occasions a cow and a pair of clothes are the fee for the sacrifice.[33]

Even in the pre-Manusmṛti age,[34] the acceptance of a cow and a bull (Gomithunam) in the Ārṣa form of marriage was considered improper for the reason that the same would be tantamount to a sale, irrespective of the monetary consideration. Such marriages therefore became to be regarded as purchasing wives at the cost of the cows and bulls given, and was despised later.

On the birth of a son the Brahmin performs a ceremony and gives away gifts in the shape of gold, earth, cows, horses, umbrella etc., as the Gods and the forefathers are supposed to visit the house.[35]

The Upanayana Saṁskāra (thread marriage) if performed in the 7th year brings in holy lusture, in the 8th year longevity, in the 9th year glory, in the 10th year food, in the 12th year cattle.[36] The optional ages are prescribed for obtaining the above special merits according to old conventions.

When the cows are driven out for grazing the keeper prays for their protection invoking Indra[37] and on their return home he greets them with the wish to be rich in sweet.[38] One desirous of thriving in his cattle-wealth licks with his tongue the forehead of the first-born calf before it is licked by its mother, feeling it as the phlegm of the cows while being gulped.[39]

One lacking wealth should celebrate the Aṣṭaka with the sacrifice of an animal or atleast accompanied by offer of food to a cow.[40] One desirous of children or of cattle will have his threshold facing the north.[41] Sacrifice of green cow dung is done daily both times to make one's means of livelihood inexhaustible[42] while one-thousand oblations of the male and female calf-dung are offered to have cattlewealth.[43] Again to gain hundred cart-loads of gold one should fast for a fortnight and on the first day of a dark fortnight feast the Brahmins with boiled milk rice prepared of one Kaṁsa of rice.[44]

From the Manusmṛti; it is seen that cattle-rearing and agriculture are the means by which a Vaiśya subsists,[45] study of Vedas trade and money lending being subsidiary.[46] He both after Upanayana and Vivāha carry on tending cattle,[47] it being

his traditional profession, from the time the Lord of Creatures conferred cattle on them.[48] The tending of cattle should not be taken by another caste if a Vaiśya derelicts it.[49] Brahmins are to carry out the duties of teaching, studying, sacrificing for himself, and for others, making gifts and receiving them.[50] The Brahmin tending cattle is considered as a Śudra by the king.[51] The Vaiśya's traditional avocation of agriculture and cattle rearing can, as a last resort, be adopted by a Brahmin when he is unable to keep his body and soul together by his occupation of teaching, sacrificing for others and accepting gifts, the resources for his sustenance.[52] During the smṛti period the cattle that grazed away the neighbour's field were not punished but the herdsmen were fined. In the absence of an attendant, the cattle were simply driven away.[53]

For compensating the loss caused by the cattle, the owner had to take vicarious responsibility in addition to a mulct of one paṇa and a quarter.[54] Since Manu held that no damage should be claimed when a cow within 10 days after calving grazes away the crop, there was exemption, for the same.[55]

A vaiśya by way of tax used to pay one-eighth of his profits on grain and 1/20th on gold and cattle. Śūdras and other low castes rendered services to the king.[56]

The performance of sacrifices was obligatory to the owners of the cows. One owning hundred cows used to kindle the sacred fire while the one having thousand cows used to perform Soma Sacrifice and drink Soma Juice. To perform such sacrifices, when a keep runs short of a few head of cows, he can unhesitatingly take the cows even from Brahmins and Kṣatriyas[57] and it was not at all a sin when he either by force or fraud took away cows from well-to-do people who refused to give them. The said act is considered to be adding to the merit of the sacrificer.[58] Even low caste people are referred to have given gifts of cows to sages of noted austerity and to instance one Bṛbu is referred in Ṛgveda in praise for his donation of cows to Śaṁyu.[59] Śataguḥ (one having a hundred cows) and Sahasraguḥ (one having a thousand cows) appearing in Smṛti literature and in the latter literature go to prove the cattle secured greater esteem and social status in terms of wealth. In Vedic period too possession of cattle was considered as posses-

sion of wealth. Those who rear cattle in hamlets and subsist on them are cowherds. He is Nanda who is the overlord of cows numbering 9 lakhs. One having 5 lakhs cows is known as Upananda. The one possessing ten lakh of cows is called Vṛṣabhānu while one possessing a crore of cows is called Nandarāja and one possessing fifty lakhs of cows is Vṛṣabhānuvara.[60]

Yet one more thing requires emphasis i.e. the products of the cow yield namely milk, curd, butter, urine and dung in the expiatory rites of a sinful person to get himself washed of the sins. The gift of cows also serves the same purpose on some occasions.[61]

In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa[62] Viśwamitra was received by Vasiṣtha. Viśwamitra was struck with wonder on seeing the efficacy of Śabalā (sacrificial cow of the sage Vasiṣṭha) in producing relishing dishes rich with all the six flavours to serve his army. He asked the sage Vasiṣṭha to give him the sacrificial cow accepting fourteen thousand elephants with all the paraphernalia and eight hundred chariots, harnessed with four horses to each chariot and eleven thousand horses of the best type and a crore of heifers of variegated colours and gems and gold as much as he desired. He pleaded that the cow is equal to a gem and the king is attributed as 'ratnahārin' (one appropriating the best things of the world). Sage Vasiṣṭha said that any amount of returns for the sacrificial cow would not allow him to part with the cow and that he depended on her for his Havya (sacrificial offerings to Gods), Kavya (ceremonial offering to forefathers), livelihood, sacrificial fire, worship, sacrificial rites, the chantings of Svāhā and Vaṣat and all sorts of learning. That cow was his very gem and wealth, his very affluence and life. His sacrifices to the new moon and full moon and all other sacrifices along with their Dakṣiṇa and all his religious duties depended upon her and flatly refused to part with the desire-yielding cow (Kāmadhenu). From the above discussion the greatness of cow regarding her economic aspect can be well-surmised. The inspiring words uttered by Vasiṣtha as conveyed by Vālmīki are noteworthy. They are therefore reproduced below.

Nāham śatasahasreṇa Nāpikotiśatairgavām
Rājandāsyāmi sabalām Rāśībhīrajatasya Vā
Āsyām Havyam ca kavyam ca prāṇayātrā tathaiva ca
Āyattamagnihotraṁ ca Balirhomāstathaiva ca
Svāhākāra Vaṣatkārau Vidyāśca Vividhāstathā
Etadevahi me Ratnametadevahi me dhanam
Etadevahi Sarvasvametadevahi Jīvitam
Darśaśca Pūrṇamāsaśca Yajñāscaivāpta dakṣiṇāḥ
Etadevahi Me Rajanvividhasca Kriyastatha
Adomula Kriyassarvāmama Rājannasaṁśayaḥ
Bahunā Kiṁ Pralāpena Na dāsye Kāmadohinīm

In the Mahabharata[63] also Nandinī (the daughter of the celestial Surabhi) is described as the sacrificial cow of Vasiṣṭha. Surabhi, the daughter of Dakṣa by her connection with Kaśyapa begets Nandinī in the form of a Cow for the welfare of the world. Nandinī like her mother was the cow of plenty and giver of all desires. Dyau (one of the eight Vasus) along with his wife happened to see once the cow Nandnī. In admiration of Nandinī the Vasu, Dyau, told his wife the secret why Vasiṣṭha remained unchanged in youth for a period of ten thousand years was because of the excellent milk of Nandinī. On the request of his wife to take the cow for being presented to her friend Jitavatī, Dyau stole that cow along with her calf. Vasiṣṭha getting at the incident by his divine vision cursed all the vasus to be born on earth. This story goes to tell the utilitarian aspect of cow milk to perpetuate the life of a person on earth.

The properties[64] of milk are described elsewhere as three-fold. As Sudhā it is useful to Nāgas and as Svadhā to forefathers and as Amṛta to deities. Surabhi is said to have yielded the three-fold milk. Born from the Amṛta, she dwells in the Rasātala yielding milk which is the essence of all the best things on the face of earth. Her four daughters Surūpā, Haṁsikā, Subhadrā and Sarva Kāmadughā bear the burden of the quarters East, South, West and North respectively.

The economic value of the cow is illustrated by another story.[65] Some fishermen once cast their large net and caught many fish and water-animals along with Cyavana. Cyavana had been practising penance for a long time in those waters. He was well-

versed in the Vedas. The fishermen on seeing him prostrated before him in reverence and awe, afraid as they were to become a prey to his wrath for having obstructed his penance. In the meanwhile, the fish caught in the net died and the sage on seeing them dead was filled with compassion and sighed heavily many times. The fishermen begged his pardon for dragging him out and entreated him to command them to do a thing fitting the occasion. As Cyavana lived with the fish till then, he wanted to die or to be sold along with the fish. The fishermen reported the incident to the king Nahuṣa. On the sage's bid Nahuṣa was about to pay a thousand coins as the price of the fish and the sage. Then the sage said it was too low a price. Thereupon Nahuṣa tendered one hundred thousand coins enquiring the sage whether that would be a proper price. Thereupon the sage advised the king to consult his Ministers for a proper price to be given for them. Nahuṣa's offer to pay a crore of coins or even half of his kingdom nay, even the whole of his kingdom was not considered by the sage as a fit price Nahuṣa was at his wit's end and consulted his Ministers and priest. Just then an ascetic born of a cow came forward whom Nahuṣa requested to decide the price of that great Ṛṣi as otherwise the holy Cyavana would become angry and destroy the three worlds. The ascetic thereupon decided that a cow is the price of the Ṛṣi[66] and the Monarch and his Counsellers were highly convinced of the said decision. Cyavana also agreed to the said proposal telling that there is no greater wealth than the kine, the root of prosperity. They yield the best food in the form of Havis even to the deities, besides being the chief conductresses. Again sacrifices require milk, curd and ghee that the cows yield. They confer on all living beings happiness and that country where kine breathe fearlessly shines in splendour teeming with prosperity, freed from sins. Kine represent the stairs leading to heaven and are adorned in heaven also. They are Goddesses competent to grant every wish and are superior to any thing in the world. Cows give us milk, curd, ghee, dung, skin, bones, horns and hair and the milk of the kine is the nectar[67] of the deities.

Persons well-versed in Vedas have proclaimed how best the cow-ghee serves in libations poured into the sacrificial fire. Kine

form the life-breath of all living creatures, and therefore the Vedic pandits hold the view that kine are the best sanctuaries for all the living beings.[68] Cows are regarded as mothers of all beings capable of conferring every happiness.[69]

Deities were also taken to tilling the soil with the aid of bullocks yoked to the plough in days of yore.[70] In the days of Mahābhārata the possession of the minimum number of ten cows gave one financial status and one was not looked down upon as a poor man,[71] and is referred to as Dasaguḥ entitled to be enlisted as a Donor. According to a verse,[72] keepers possessing ten cows, hundred cows, thousand cows gifting one cow, ten cows and hundred cows respectively earn equal merit (the merit derived being proportionate to the number gifted and the number possessed). Keepers of richer strata viz.,[73] Daśaguḥ, Śataguḥ and Sahasraguḥ should perform certain religious duties befitting their status, for fear of infamy. Failure to lit domestic fire for daily worship by a Śataguh and to perform sacrifices by a Śahasraguh and to perform the householder's duties like hospitality by a well-to-do (having not less than ten cows) Daśaguh were not looked upon as worthy persons in the days of the Mahābhārata. Cows are endued with the elements of strength and energy and are the embodiment of intellect. They produce the immortality in the sacrifice. Without the products that the cows yield, sacrifices cannot be performed at all and hence they form a contributory cause for sacrifices performed for immortality.

All people being dependent upon the cow-products have upheld the cause of the cows.[74] Therefore the general craze to go in for cows as an asset caught fancy especially when the cows are capable of returns in the shape of milk[75] and milk-products are reckoned as the cause of prosperity. There was the conventional practice of taking meal sitting on fresh-cow-hide facing the west, and taking ghee in an earthern plate to enjoy prosperity that the cow yields.[76] As in past so also in the future there is nothing to emulate the cow. The cows uphold sacrifices with their skins, havis, horns, tail hair, milk and fat.[77]

A person who wishes to obtain wealth has to recite the Gomatī mantras for the fulfilment of his desire. In fact all wishes cherished by a person may be fulfilled by reciting these mantras.[78]

The Goddess of Riches always is present in the dung and urine of the cows.[79] Sacrifices require indispensably curd and Ghee and the cow forms an indispensable link. The possession of cows is a must for prosperity as well peace, and spiritual bliss. Cows are considered as the representatives of the highest energy not only in this world but in the world above.

The male calves are helpful in tillage. They patiently bear all burdens despite hunger and thirst and also support sages and all creatures. They are guileless in their behaviour. Devotion to the cow is attendant with assured fruition of one's wishes as is the case with women. There is nothing unattainable to one that is devoted to the cow, be his wish for son, daughter, wealth, religious merit, knowledge, happiness—what not ?[80]

As adverted to already the duties of a Vaisya are agriculture, breeding of kine and trade. This is the case even during the Mahābhārata times.[81]

Kālidāsa in his Raghuvaṁśa illustrates the story of Dilīpa and Nandinī the sacrificial cow of sage Vasiṣtha. The king is referred there in to have said to the lion that the cow is the wealth of the sage who established the sacrificial fire.[82] Thus it can be seen that the emperors and sages considered cows as their personal property. How Dilīpa volunteers to sacrifice himself for the sake of protecting his preceptor's wealth is very well elucidated by Kālidās.[83]

Economics of the Cow

Cow-oriented Indian Economy is inextricably linked with preservation, protection and development of Cows and is also in keeping with the culture and religious outlook of the Indians. Hence, the reverence for the cow is a concomitant factor in India.

From times immemorial, stress has been laid on the importance of the cow by the wise saints, seers, leaders of thought like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Lokmanya Tilak, Shri Purushottama Das Tandon, St. Vinobha Bhave and a host of others. Gandhi held that the question of cow is more important than that of the Swaraj itself. Cow alone could help solve the Economic problem.[84]

For Draught, Bullocks Economically Cheaper than Tractors

In a pre-eminently agricultural country like India, the importance of Cow needs no emphasis. Both the Vegetarians as well as the non-Vegetarians are fed by the cow's milk. According to the targets of the Third Five Year Plan, thirty crores of acres of land were said to have been brought under plough in order to achieve self-sufficiency in Food under the 'Green Revolution'.

As per official reports about thirty five crores of acres were under cultivation by the end of the Third Five Year Plan. According to the Royal Commission of Agriculture, twenty bullocks are required to cultivate one hundred acres of land. Since the breed has admittedly been deteriorating a pair of bullocks can hardly be expected to cultivate even an extent of eight acres of land now-a-days. Based on this data, it can be safely assessed that our country needs 8,87,50,000 bullocks to efficiently serve thirty five crores of acres of land. As per the cattle census of 1961, only 6,17,37,000 bullocks are said to have been available. Thus it will be seen that on a modest estimate, atleast a crore of bullocks are still needed to meet the low-agricultural production in our country, if only we expect to bring under plough the available arable tracts.

For draught purpose, admittedly the bullocks are found economically cheaper than the tractors. About four thousand crores of Horse-Power of bullock power is pressed into service at negligibly low recurring expense with no extra investment. To wrench out the use of the bullocks by mechanised means, about four lakh tractors would be required, involving enormous capital investment and entailing recurring expenditure. An average farmer owning five acres of land cannot afford to buy a tractor. The use of bullocks for agriculture saves capital investment running in crores of rupees and recurring expense of Rs. 283 crores worth of petrol and diesel oil (much of it being imported is taking out the cream of the Indian farmer's hard earnings) in order to produce four thousand crores H.P. of energy by implementing four lakh tractors.[85]

Cow Contribution to National Wealth

Similarly the contribution of cows alone through milk comes upto the nearness of forty-five per cent of the total milk production in the country. As per official statistics, about 20,721,000 eows yield about 19·11 million tons of milk annually, while about 12,180,000 buffaloes annually yield 12·48 million tons. On the whole, Rs. 659 crores are added to the National Income through milk of both species of which 45 per cent despite the neglected condition of cows prevailing in the country, is claimed to have been from the Cows.

Indian experts in the Memorandum of Human Nutrition vis-a-vis Animal Nutrition submitted to the Government of India in 1954, point out that though the performance of a large section of the cattle is very low, whatever milk is produced and whatever bullock power is made available in the country is from the existing cow-wealth. The maintenance of the present available number of bullock is quite essential for the cultivation of the arable land.

Cattle contribute much to agricultural development in India. About two hundred and twenty seven crores of rupees worth of organic manure, half of which is now allowed to be burnt as fuel, is produced annually. The four thousand crore tons of cow dung produced annually is estimated to contain about 40 crore lbs of Nitrogen, 200 crore lbs of Phosphorous and 400 lbs of Potassium.[86]

In the opinion of Dr. Voelcker, the most general manure alike in India and in England is cattle manure, or as made in England, farm-yard manure. In the latter country it has to be and can be supplemented or partly replaced by artificial manure. This was not the case in India, as cattle manure was the universal fertiliser and often the only one available. He deplores the agricultural loss when a large portion of the dung from the cattle is used as fuel. On an analysis of Indian cow-dung he found one ton of dried cow-dung is equal to 155 lbs of sulphate of ammonia sulphate per annum. Much appreciable outturn can therefore be had of it, if properly used in the fields. Since the practice of burning dung is resorted to out of sheer necessity, as observed by him, and if wood could be made

cheap and accessible to them, there would be enormous increase in the amount of manure available for the soil.[87]

Cattle dung if stored properly and urine if conserved properly without being allowed to be drained off would serve as valuable manures. Half the value of the cattle manure is attributable to their urine itself.[88]

Non-mechanisation of our farms, the high pressure of population on agricultural lands and our large cattle population may be a disadvantage in one sense; but all this can be turned into an asset so far as the production of farm-yard manure is concerned. Unfortunately, it is still common for villagers to use cowdung mainly as fuel and thus deprive the soil of a rich manure. Nearly a few decades ago a plan to encourage the planting of quick-growing species of trees in villages for use as firewood was set afloat with a view to sparing cow-dung for the farms. But unfortunately this programme fell through for want of vigourous pursuit. Cow-dung gas plants have also been developed. The waste products from these plants are considered a good manure. It is reported that at Uruli Kanchan near Poona, a big cow-dung gas plant has been in operation for many years supplying gas for both domestic and industrial purposes. These gas plants can be fabricated even in small workshops wherever there is factory to undertake such things, but here again, the timely efforts to popularise them have tapered off into indifference.

By the use of organic manure, there is immediate response in agricultural production and soil fertility without the necessity of chemical crop protective measures. Even after natural death, the cattle yield an annual income of rupees fifteen crores from hides, and Rs. 1.38 crores from bones, let alone the income prospect from carcasses by proper economic utilisation.

Apathy on the Part of the Government

Cattle Population in India—Not Surplus

Cattle contributes significantly to the national income. According to the National Income Statistics issued by the Central Statistical Bureau, Government of India (1961) out of the total

income from agriculture (nearly Rs. 6,200 crores)—forming half slice of the national income—the income from animal husbandry accounts for Rs. 800 crores (7·2 per cent). The Estimate of Dr. N. Srinivasan from cattle industry is about Rs. 3,400 crores annually at the present rates.[89]

The hold that the cattle population in India is surplus is a misleading half-truth. In Denmark, Argentina, Australia, New-zealand, there are 192, 24, 199, 268 cattle per square mile, while in India there are 115 cattle per square mile (i.e., 44 head of cattle per hundred of population). The performance of Indian cattle in regard to milk is miserably lower, though this is more than compensated by 4000 crores HP energy supplied by bullocks born of cows, 4000 crore tons of farm-yard manure, organic in nature, economic in cost and readily available at farms.[90]

Animal husbandry experts in every State spend, on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, crores of rupees; yet the development in cattle and fodder resources is not upto the mark and worth the expenditure involved. The expert-administrators 'Go-sevaks' and cow-oriented industrialists and religious heads have to rise to the occasion and work heart and soul for the development of cattle and fodder resources and economic utilisation of manure and carcasses after the natural deaths of the cattle, in order to have better results.[91]

Cow vs. Buffalo

The Go-Seva Sangh at Wardha founded by Gandhiji in 1940 is having as one of its objects to foster the breeding of cows as against buffaloes. It is in keeping with the practice from Vedic times. Had not the cow since long enjoyed such a glorious status, she would have been extinct along with the buffalo long back. Both the cow and the buffalo are numerous but ironically neither of them flourishes. The apathy of the herdsmen and the commercial mindedness are the root causes for the sad state of cow-wealth.[92] Gandhiji lays much stress on the improvement of the breed of the cow. The cow-keepers should be educated properly their duty towards the cow, and the art of cow-keeping. Fundamentally by protecting the cow we realise our duty towards all living beings. He deplores that we have forgotten our real

religion having reduced cow service to a farce. He advocates the use of cow's milk and its products. The footwear of dead but not slaughtered cows and bullocks.[93]

Recent investigations on the dietetic value of cow's milk and buffalo's milk claim cow's milk as superior to buffalo's milk. Children and invalids cannot digest buffalo's milk and so suffer from diarrhoea. The acids in the undigested fat draw up salts from the body—so necessary for the building of bones—leading to rickets. There is difference in the fats in cow-milk and buffalo-milk. The percentage of volatile and soluble acids in cow-ghee is greater and so it is easily digested. The cow-fat is over ten times richer in Vitamin A than buffallo-fat.[94] The Gopalak Sangh, Sholapur collected the following facts from persons who can speak with authority in and outside India on the subject :

1) In the absence of mother's milk, cow milk alone is useful to children. Buffalo milk is injurious to the development of children.
2) Being easily digestible, cow milk is very beneficial to patients.
3) Mr. Bruen, Livestock Expert to the Government of Bombay says that buffalo milk is hard to digest by a person of any age. The excess fat in the buffalo milk forms in soap in the intestine and becomes hard to digest with the usual amount of salts. It takes the deficient quantity of the mineral salts from bones. Hence the bones are weakened. The cow-milk, unlike the baffalo-milk, is easily digested.
4) Cow-milk is conducive to the intellectual growth mainly of children.
5) It is hygienic if cows are kept in the city instead of rearing up buffaloes.[95]

Buffalo-ghee is not at all a substitute to cow-ghee. The deprivation of the cow and her male progeny will leave the farmer prostrate.

It is held by Sardar Data Singh, M.D.D. (Eng) of the Montgomery Dairy Farm that the buffalo is not an economical

animal for the reason that[96]

1) The buffalo matures one year later than the cow.
2) The duration between dry period and calving of a buffalo is more than three times when compared to a cow.
3) A better-fed, well-cared-for cow gives more milk than a buffalo, cow being amenable to treatment and protection.
4) The male calves of the cow are more useful for draught and tillage than those of a buffalo. Hence the male calves of buffalo are generally slaughtered.
5) A buffalo easily succumbs to disease than a cow.
6) Even a small zamindar is not able to tend a buffalo as it required extensive grazing ground and plenty of water, unlike a cow.
7) Sudden change of climate affects the milk yielding capacity of a buffalo whereas the cow adjusts herself to the atmospheric conditions.
8) Generally there is higher percentage of fat in the buffalo milk. But a good cow transcends a buffalo even in that aspect.

Gandhi decries the inhuman practice of sending the cows to slaughterhouses immediately after the cows become dry. He suggests that the cow should not and need not be sent to the butcher as she yields valuable milk and good progeny and thus she will have more than paid for her maintenance. She supplies manure. Even after she becomes dry if she is maintained, her skin, bones etc., fetch the same value as when she was alive.[97]

The unscrupulous practice of marketing the buffalo milk as cow milk and mixing both cow and buffalo milk spoils the fair name of the cow milk.[98] So it is upto the Government to make suitable legislation against such wretched practices which affect the hygiene of the public. The public also in course of time will realise the virtues of cow milk and then alone the false notion of buffalo as the only milch animal would go.

That the male of the cow is superior to the female of the cow is also not a genuine remark. As the female of the cow alone

is responsible for the entire cattle breeding, she yields male calves also when she is betterfed. Proper feeding is therefore a must. Almost all the cows respond to better treatment. Generally good cows yield good calves. If a cow has any strain before her covering or during parturition then she may not calve a good one. When a good male calf is born, it will certainly become a good male cow given better feeding and proper care. Moreover the hygiene of the calf will have a start with a better change and is affected by its dam or sire. Thus the cow proves a useful economic animal. If she calves earlier she becomes more economical and yields valuable returns in the form of calf and milk. Undoubtedly it is a fact that the cow is maintained by herself. It is the lookout of the cultivator to see that the cow is not put to struggle for existence.

The economic factors such as early maturity, reduction of calving intervals, and milk yielding are relied on natural phenomena. Particularly the cow when undernourished will have long intervals between calving and calving, as it comes to heat once in four or five years. In normal course, when well fed she comes to heat in twenty-six months or so. When the cow delays her coming to heat and calving, the feeding of her in the dry period is a mere waste and uneconomic. By underfeeding she becomes useless for nearly two years or more during which period she consumes her food. Feeding the cow from the beginning is really necessary to make her economical. If she suffers from want of food, she makes her owner also suffer. Even a well-bred cow is sure to curtail her economic factors, when underfed. Even an ill-bred cow would come to heat when she is well-fed. Similar is the case with the other economic factors like calving intervals and milk-yield. A poor milker becomes poorer when she is underfed. A cow which calves once in two years delays her calving for one or two more years for want of proper feeding. Thus to have better economic benefits feeding the cow properly from the beginning is very necessary.

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66241

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Sacrifice and the Cow

In Ṛgvedic times, the Āryans used to attach the greatest importance in their daily life to Yajña (Sacrifice) as a means to have spiritual bliss, plenty and prosperity. Yajñas were considered to be the source for the well-being of the family, the race and the nation and for the gratification of the manes and the deities. The Āryans—a hoary sacrifice-oriented race—used to undertake on a lavish scale as frequently as possible very many Yajñas without reservations of their individual mite and status. There are daily sacrifices, fortnightly, monthly, seasonal, annual and occasional sacrifices prescribed on auspicious days of importance. Alike the gravity of the benefits that accrue by undertaking such sacrifices are also different.

Origin of Yajna

Yajña is done to attain a desired end and hence it is a good means to a good end since the benefits attached to them are for the good of the individuals and the society at large.[1] The performer of a sacrifice should, with a pious motive, undertake the Yajña in order to invoke and propitiate a particular deity or an invisible being or spirit which is noted for granting the particular desire that can be gained by doing a particular Yajña.

For example, when a wide-spread calamity like an epidemic, pestilence, famine, flood etc., takes place claiming the lives

of many, the Āryans used to ascribe the same to the fury and malevolent influence of a particular blood-thirsty evil spirit or spirits who required to be propitiated by the offer of blood. This must have been the root cause that drove the Āryans to perform sacrifices.

The germ of Yajña having thus grown in their minds root and branch made them kill those animals that they loved most by pinching necessity to ward off the evil otherwise attendant on them as a whole and hence the Yajñas are generally performed for not only individual bliss but also for the common good. The force of necessity to mitigate the evil effects of the elements or spirits gained momentum as they used to feel the relief after the performance of such Yajñas. The psychological fear complex and the relief after Yajñas brought in the conventional practice of performing Yajñas to achieve the desired results and in Ṛgvedic times varieties of Yajñas for achieving specific desires were practised by many.

According to a hymn described in the Ṛgveda[2], the primeval being (Puruṣa) performed sacrifice offering himself as oblation in that sacrifice and the entire universe sprang from it.

According to Taittiriya Samhimta Manu by the grace of Mitra and Varuṇa got the cow for the preservation of Ghee for sacrificial purpose.[3] Somewhere it is described that even Prajāpati inadvertently offered oblation into the fire therefrom many deities were created.[4] For all the Yajñas Brāhmiṇs and cows are a must and so the cow and her spokesman the Brāhmiṇ priest were enjoying the highest importance in the esteem of the Āryans. Since the cow was the treasure of the rich the act of killing the cows in such sacrifices exhibited a pure and sacrificing heart of the performer.[5]

Evolution

There was constant struggle going on between the benevolent spirits or Gods as against the influence of malevolent spirits or Demons. Hence the Āryans were led to entertain a fear in their minds that such spirits may take a heavy toll of lives unless they are gratified by cow-slaughter the cow being the valuable asset of Āryans and disowning the dear and valuable things.

would alone satiate the spirits or demons. Thus it became obligatory on the part of the Āryans to strengthen the Gods in their struggle with the evil powers and hence probably came the conventional practice of Yajña mingled with prayers and such drinks and victuals as are found capable of strengthening them in their own life.

The oblations, however, are not directly offered to the spirit or element or deity that is invoked for being gratified but they are offered through Agni[6].

Natural Inclination of the Vedic Aryans to Perform Sacrifices and the Cause Therefor

The Āryans of the Vedic age, in addition to the vedic injunction, were obliged to perform sacrifices and offer oblations to the Gods with other motives.

Agriculture, their mainstay, prospered only when the atural phenomena also went hand in hand with allied other factors conducive to a bumper yield. The vedic Āryans sincerely believed that all natural phenomena are the visible manifestations of different Gods with assigned powers vested on them. They were afraid of the unforeseen natural calamities that hampered cultivation and took a heavy toll of the prospect of yield. So, for the sake of favourable weather and successful cultivation, they used to perform sacrifices in order to propitiate those elements and deities.[7]

Some Important Varieties of Sacrifice

It is interesting to note that in every sacrifice either obligatory (Nitya) or occasional (Naimittika) the cow and its products have an important role to play. The Homa sacrifice is done with oblations of milk, curd, rice, etc., to the Sun god and Agni in the sacrificial fire pit daily twice.[8] The Agnihotra oblation comprises milk and for this purpose a milch cow designated Agnihotrī is specially reared.[9] Boiled milk is offered as oblation in the Āhavanīya fire with a ladle called Agnihotra-havanī.

Of the various offerings prescribed for various desires the

person desirous of cattle or heaven offers milk. One craving for objects of senses should offer curds. Butter also is offered in certain kāmya-karmas like those performed for mental vigour etc.[10]

Even among the Darśa Purṇamāsa sacrifices performed on the new moon and the fullmoon days, the second oblation on the new moon day is curd and the third is milk to Indra.[11]

In the Agniṣṭoma, the model for all Soma sacrifices on the second day during the Prāyaṇiyēṣṭi five deities are invoked of whom melted butter is offered to four deities excepting Aditi who is offered an oblation of rice.[12]

After the Prāyaṇīya the purchase of the Soma creeper has to be undertaken by bartering a one year old cow, gold, she-goat, milch cow and her calf, an ox or draught bullock etc.[13]

The sacrificial fee in the shape of gifts constitute among other animals, cows. In the Udayanīyeṣṭi a special preparation of milk, curd, honey etc. called caru is offered as oblation. Here the performance of the sacrifice of a barren cow (Vandhyā) is done in olden days. But now during the Kaliage this practice is prohibited.[14]

A cow sacrifice is considered essential in marriages, the cow was one of the gifts offered to Bridegroom in his honour. Though cow sacrifice is prohibited in the Kaliage, the offer of cows still holds on.[15]

In the Pitṛ Yajna 3 kinds of oblations are used of which one is fried barley powder mixed with the milk of a cow which has lost its calf.[16]

From the above injunctions and statements of the holy texts it is possible to infer how important a role the cow plays in sacrifices.

The entire creation sprang from the sacrifice and the part of cow is significant in the performance of sacrifice is well known.

Anustarani

In ancient times, a cow was sacrificed at the time of the funeral of a departed soul to propitiate the protector of the regions.[17] People believed that by sacrificing the cow the sins of the dead would be washed away. In the event of an accident,

the cow might be set free singing to the glory of the cow as 'Aghnyā', which ought not to be killed.

Later, cow-slaughter was prohibited and in its stead came the gift of the cow which was made just before the death of a person and at the cremation ground before the corpse is burnt. The sacrifice of the cow Anustāraṇī in the vedic period changed in course of time to the harmless practice of the gift of the cow Vaitaraṇī in the later period.[18]

Brahmani Bulls

The dead body before being directly consigned to the fire was wrapped up in cow's hide obtained from one recently slain along with its fat and marrow. Perhaps this process was adopted by a few rich in order not to allow the body directly attacked by the fire but would be sufficiently heated to quicken it into life and send it to heaven. Of course the body would be completely consumed by fire and reduced to ashes by its blaze. One can presume that this was done only by a few rich who would have performed sacrifices in their life-time, inasmuch as ordinary person could not be expected to afford such a costly process of cremation when either a cow or a bull need be killed.

As days passed on, it became a thing to be looked down upon if a cow was killed and again cow-killing came altogether to be forbidden in later age. So, the practice probably assumed a harmless form of Vrṣot-sarga at the time of performing the Śrāddha ceremony of a distinguished man by dedicating a bull and later releasing it to roam about and graze freely about.[19]

These dedicated bulls are known as Brāhmaṇi bulls. Only the select bull was purchased from a herd and it was considered not a sin if the Brāhmaṇi bulls graze even corn fields. The Brāhmaṇi bulls used to serve as a breeder for the cows in a village though of course now-a-days only a vestige of that practice remains as any bull will serve the purpose.

A New Sacrifice Demonstrated by Krsna

A new sacrifice to propitiate Viṣṇu, the cows, the Brāhmiṇs and

the Mountain is described below for the forest dwellers milk-men headed by Nanda.

The dwellers of the forest shall celebrate a sacrifice for the benefit of the kine, the Brahmins and the mountains with the articles that could be gathered therefor, by cooking various kinds of dishes, soups, and Pāyasas and other delicious eatables, from wheat, cakes and Śaśkulis, with milk, accompanied by the chant of the Vedas by Brāhmiṇs and oblations on the sacrificial fires and gifts and feastings and dakṣiṇas. Proper gifts shall also be given to the dogs, the caṇḍalas and morally fallen and others deserving pity.

The cows shall be fed with fodder, the mountains paid homages. Neatly decked with ornaments, enjoying food to the fill, smeared with unguents and dressed in fine garments one should circumambulate the kine, the Brāhmiṇs, the sacrificial fires and the mountain.

The Gopas arranged everything as per the bid of Kṛṣṇa and with the articles collected for the sacrifice in propitiating Indra they honoured the Brāhmiṇs, foddered the kine, and driving the cattle ahead of them, circumambulated the mountain, riding on chariots yoked with lusty bullocks. The cow-herds sang the glories of Kṛṣṇa, and the twice-born ones pronounced benedictions on them.

Lord Kṛṣṇa assuming a different form to instil belief in them ate the articles for adoration telling that he was the mountain and he grew up prodigiously and along with the inhabitants of Vraja Kṛṣṇa himself paid respects and said that mountain can assume form at his wish and would kill those who behave disrespectfully towards him. They all bowed down to the mountain for the welfare of the kine and themselves.[20]

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7. India of the age of the Brahmaṇas, p. 138 .
8. Y.T.P., p. 10.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 82, and reference may be made to the vide Chapter 1, pp. 12 and 14; 'Introduction' and B.V.P. Part 4; Chapter 115 verses 112 and 113.
15. Kaviraja Abhinandana Grantha p. 1 article 'Interesting Developments in Vedic Rituals' by Chintaharana Chakravarthi.
16. Y.T.P., p. 50.
17. R.V., 10-16-4 and 7 and T.S. 7-1-6 and reference may be made to 'Hindu Saṁskāras' p. 435 to 437 and reference may be made to the vide 'Cow Donations and Results' pp. 152 to 154.
18. Hindu Saṁskāras, p. 437.
19. Ṛgvedic Culture, p. 417.
20. B.P., 10-24-25 to 37.

5

Cow Donations and Results

In ancient India, cows were considered as wealth by kings and every householder. Great kings were distinguished by their charitable disposition in donating cows and bulls to Brāhmiṇs, who were expected to perform Yāgas (sacrifices) for the well-being of the nation as a whole. Besides, the cows gifted by the kings and the cow-keepers provided the necessary nourishment to the families of the Brahmins.

Even from the Ṛgvedic times, it has been the accepted belief that it is a pious act to donate cattle and the donor is ultimately the considerate performer. Hence the upright performer of pious acts of donation is the contributory cause to propitiate Indra when the libations are received frequently thus. Therefore Indra confers on us all the myriad treasures to sharpen our intellects and enjoy plenty and prosperity.[1]

Cows were presented to the Brahmin priests as a reward for the successful performance of Sacrifices.[1a] Just as it is palatable to every one to take pure warm butter from the milk, so also the gift of a milch-cow is acceptable to anybody.[2] Sage Vāmadēva prays Agni to be generous and condemn the illiberal persons.[3] Svanaya bestowed sixty thousand cows upon Kakṣivan.[3a] The Rājā Ṛṇancaya, the lord of the Principality of Rusamas was the recipient of acclamation when he gifted away thousand cows to the sage Babhṛ.[4] When Śrutaratha, endued with affluence, bestowed three hundred cows upon Prabhuvasu.

of Aṁgīras race, he was praised gloriously by the recipient.[5] Bhauma prayed to Brhaspati for bestowing wealth, who were bountiful and givers of horses, cows and cloths.[6]

When Sage Śyāvāsva went a-begging for alms in the course of rigorous austerity, Śaśīyasi (queen of the king Tāranta) with the permission of the king gave him a herd of cattle and costly ornaments. According to Sāyaṇa this is a wonderful story.[7] Another wonderful incident is related in the Āgamas. Once Bharadwaja and his son afflicted by hunger in a lonely forest had to accept many cows from the carpenter Vṛdhu, and Bṛbu, though a carpenter and inferior by caste, stood out for his generosity.[8] Bṛbu presided over the high place of the Paṇis and Śaṁyu praised him in glorious terms in the Ṛgveda for his generous donation of thousands of cattle to him immediately for the mere asking.[9]

Aśvattha gave to Pāyu ten chariots with their horses and a hundred cows to the priests.[10] Commending the liberality of Sudāsa, Vasiṣṭha circumambulated Agni like a primeval priest in the sacrificial chamber for the reason that Sudāsa donated two hundred cows and two chariots with two ladies to him.[11]

Playogi's son Asaṁga surpassed the rest when he donated ten thousand oxen out of ten bright hued oxen that came forward for Indra.[12]

Tirindira and Pārśavya bestowed ten thousand herd of cows upon Pajra for the Soma song.[13] Sūdah prayed to Indra to give a cow with an unfailing udder shedding thousand streams supplying milk to the desire of the worshipper.[14] Śabara requested Prajāpati to bestow upon him cows with the concurrence of the universal gods. The fore-fathers brought auspicious cows to their cow-stall to be in possession of their progeny.[15]

The curious hymn in Atharvaveda relating to a dialogue between the Atharvan (the sacrificial priest) and Varuṇa goes to prove how well the deities also used to make gifts of cows to priests for being praised by them.[16] When Varuṇa retracted his gift of a brindled cow upon the priest (Atharvan), Atharvan remonstrated with Varuṇa asking him why he should not also be included in the group of the so-called misers that are reproached for cancelling their presents and why he should not be called

an illiberal person by men. Thereupon, to ward off the blot of being considered as an illiberal giver, Varuṇa gave him back the brindled cow and requested to recite hymns in his praise. Thus it is evident that deities also had the fear of being censured, branded as illiberal givers especially when they withdraw the promised gifts and they are enamoured of being praised by priests, who of course always praise the liberal qualities of the deities in their hymns.

The imperative duty of giving cows to Brahmins and the sin in not doing so is elaborately described in a hymn.[17] The cow springs to life for the sake of Gods and Brahmins and hence she must be offered to Brahmin priests. Therefore the cow belongs to those who came to ask for her.[18] Anybody claiming ownership of a cow is playing mischief on the priests, and when he withholds to give her to a priest who comes for her, he becomes aloof from Gods besides being a target to the Brahmin's wrath,[19] and the cow that was refused to be given does harm to the keeper.[20] Therefore the cow should be regarded as a rich treasure belonging to the Brāhmiṇs stored away safely.[21] Therefore when Brahmins come for the gift of cows, it should be regarded that they are claiming their own treasure and without denying them their property, the cows must be offered as otherwise the cow is oppressed to lead another life,[22] and she stays rebillious in his stall. The keeper's hopes and wishes would become vain.[23] Thus it will be seen that the keepers of cows are mere custodians and they should not claim ownership over them, since the cows belong to Brāhmiṇs and Gods, therefore they should be readily parted with when any Brāhmiṇ comes for the cows. The Gods beg the cow through the Brāhmiṇ appointed by them as their spokesman, and denial of the request for a cow by a Brahmin is invoking the wrath of all the Gods.[24] When, however, many beg the cow, to the one who knows the truth must be given the cow.[25] Those who have not this knowledge and who do not offer the cow, the earth with deities is hard for them to win and rest upon.[26] Such persons will have to suffer in many ways. The cow, that is retained by the keeper without being offered when solicited by a Brahmin, makes the keeper childless and poor in cattle.[27]

Manu states that in the four Yugas (Kṛta, Treta, Dwāpara and

Kali) the principal aspects of religious life were respectively the performance of penance, mataphysical knowledge, sacrifices, and making of gifts. He stresses that both the donor and the receiver should be sincere and good, they are sure go to heaven, but if the reverse is the case, the gift renders them go to hell.[27a] Sri Rāma along with Sīta observed many vedic sacrifices and as sacrificial fees he gave hundreds of thousands of cows.[27b] King Daśaratha on behalf of his sons gave away many cows in charity according to the rituals. He bestowed upon the pious Brāhmiṇs thousands of cows whose horns were tipped with gold, yielding plenty of milk, along with their calves.[27c] Once Śrī Rāma ordered his servants to drive innumerable cows and bulls that were grazing on the banks of the Sarayū river to the hermitage of a poor Brahmin by name Trijata.[27d] In the Mahā Bhārata Yayāti represents that he donated to Brāhmiṇs the whole earth consisting horses, elephants etc., and along with a hundred Arbudas of best type of milch-cows.[27e]

Nandinī, the daughter of Surabhi and Kaśyapa, in the form of a cow was obtained by Vasiṣṭha for his sacrificial rites,[28] apparently in recognition of his vast knowledge. King Paurava is reputed for his gifts of hundreds of thousands of cows and cow-herds decked with gold. He was praised for having given away cows along with calves horns cased with gold, silver hoofs and brass milk pots etc.[29] Śibi the son of Uśīnara is also said to have given away countless number of cows—as many as the countless rain drops showered on earth, stars in the sky, sand-particles on the bank of the Ganga, stones constituting the mountain Meru, the gems or animals in the ocean.[30]

Bhagīratha excelled all princes in the giving away of gifts. He is noted for his rich offers of thousand damsels adorned with gold ornaments a thousand times. All the damsels were seated on cars that were yoked with four steeds and behind each car there were hundred cows.[31] Amūrtaraya's son Gaya is noted for having given for a century as a yearly feature one hundred and sixty thousand cows, ten thousand steeds and one crore gold niṣkas to the Brāhmiṇs at the completion of his sacrifices. The propitiated Agni, gratified at the king's penances granted him boon. Then the king wished that Agni be pleased to make him capable of making gifts always to Brāhmiṇs.[32]

King Rantideva (son of Saṁkṛti) is noted for gifting away fortnightly for a hundred years a golden bull followed by a hundred cows and eight hundred Niṣkas to each of the thousands of Brahmins.[33] Bharata the son of Duṣyanta gave to the Brahmins beautiful horses, wealth, grains and milch-cows with calves outnumbering millions.[34] Bṛhadratha the king of the Aṁgas gave as presents in the sacrifices a hundred million bulls adorned with golden chains with thousands of cows accompanying them.[35] Śaśabindu, the son of Citraratha had a hundred thousand wives and a million of sons, each of those princes married a hundred princesses each of those elephants were a hundred cars. With each car were a hundred steeds and with each steed a hundred cows. All this countless wealth, Śaśabindu bestowed upon the Brahmins in a horse sacrifice.[36] Śibi, Bhagīratha, Gaya are also referred to along with Bṛhadratha and Śaśabindu. Gaya is stated to have given away myriads of cows.[37] Kings Uśīnara, Viśwagaśva, Nṛga, Bhagīratha, Māndhatṛ (Yuvanaśwa's son), Mucukunda, Naiṣadha, Somaka, Rāma and many other reputed kings like Dilīpa of meritorious acts, all these kings by making gifts of cows attained Heaven.[38] Yudhiṣṭhira along with his brothers gifted many bulls and cows of variegated colours to the foremost Brahmins. He also performed many sacrifices and gave away gifts of hundreds of thousands of cows as sacrificial gifts.[39] King Saudasa made gifts of many cows to the Brahmins with strict restraint over his senses all the while and by virtue thereof he attained many regions of great felicity in the next world.[40]

Māndhāta the son of Yuvanāśwa, Yayāti and his father Nahuṣa while giving always cows in large numbers have secured the supreme abode that is difficult to attain even by the deities.[41]

The making of the gift of cows or bulls should proportionately be based on the means possessed by the donee, the number varying from one to thousand. The gift must be made to meritorious Brahmins. That cow which gives birth to good calves in proper seasons when donated approaches the donor in heaven in the form of a river that can grant the fruition of every desire.[42] A person giving only one cow of good milk yield is sure to get equal merit of the gifts of all desirable things on

earth put together.[43] When that is the case, why mention the inexplicable merit that one gets by offering many such cows. A person who makes a gift of a bull to a well-versed Brahmin receives great honours in heaven because the bull is the embodiment of heaven.[44] Like the cow in the form of a river, the bull in the form of heaven fulfils all the desires of the donor; the donor of a bull receives great honours in heaven. The gift of a bull is attached with a merit equal to that of Brahmacarya (divine vow).[45]

A person who gifts away a Kapilā cow along with its calf with a brazen pot, with horns cased with gold the same cow possessed of many qualities will approach her donor and grant him all his wishes. Such a person consequently lives in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of the cow and the cow saves his sons and grandsons and all his families to the seventh generation.[46]

Usual Merit attached to the Gift of Cows

By gifting cows, the donor is saved in the other world like the sails of a boat seized by the wind rescuing a person from being drowned in the sea.[47] Thus the donor is saved from falling into the dreadful gloomy hell of woe by the cows donated by him.

Above all gifts, the gift of a cow stands out, for the obvious reason that there is nothing as delicious as the milk that the cows yield. Further cows rescue all the worlds from calamity by producing milk.[48] Milk is a dependable sustenance for all beings. Hence the veteran and well-versed in Vedas state that the cows constitute the very refuge (sanctuary) of all living beings.[49] It can be safely inferred that all living beings can resort to the milk of cows for their sustenance. And again from the milk, ghee is manufactured, and ghee forms the sacrificial libations to be poured into the sacrificial fire. The deities are appeased[50] being contented with such sacrifices and they cause clouds and rain. From rains the crops grow in plenty. Thus all sorts of paddy are produced, for the sustenance of all living beings in the form of food.[51] It is therefore right to conclude that the cows are the very refuge of all living beings.[52] Surabhi is accredited to be the celestial tree to all beings even by

the very lord of Deities.[53] There is no wonder if a donor of a cow is considered as making a gift of refuge to all beings. The gift of a cow is considered equally meritorious as the very gift of nectar (Indra stated that the milk of the cow is the very nectar) [54] Thus it will be seen the gift of the cow is nothing short of gifting away the life-breath of living creatures.[55]

A person giving a cow shines just like a second Sun in all its resplendance inasmuch as cows are equal to the rays of the Sun that fall on earth. The cows stand for the prosperity and protection, and growth of all living beings.[56] That is why she is rightly held by the loving term 'GO' a nomenclature attributed to compare the cows to the rays of the Sun.

The giver of the cow perpetuates a very large race that extends over a large part of the earth.[57] The donor of a cow is considered equal to the one who makes a gift of libations in sacrifices. It is held by Vedic Paṇḍits that ghee forms the best type of libations offered into the sacrificial fire.[58] A person who offers oxen of best type is considered to obtain greater merit than the one attached to the gift of cows.[59] One who makes a gift of ghee and milk with rice called Ṣaṣṭhika at Uttaraphalguṇī receives great honours in Heaven,[60] while one who makes a gift of bull and good perfume at the time of citra sports with joy in the regions of Apsaras like the gods sporting in the garden of Nandana.[61] One making a gift of a bull and a cow yielding much milk, a cart full of paddy with a basket of clothes for wearing at the time of Viśākha is sure to gratify his ancestors and deities. He attains immutable merit in the next world.[62] One who makes a gift of a cow with a vessel of bronze for milking her under the constellation of Revatī succeeds in the fruition of every one of his wishes granted by the self-same cow in the next world.[63]

The donation of either gold or cow or land, is followed by great merit—even capable of redemption from one's sins.[64] Another three gifts signified by the same name 'Godāna' are also of equal merit.[65] These three grant the fruition of all desires. They are cow, land and (Vāk) knowledge.[66] A person who imparts knowledge to his disciple acquires merit equal to that which is won by the gift of the earth and the cows.[67] So also is the gift of cows and earth equally meritorious.

The Gift of Cows of Various Colours and the Results thereof

Those aspiring to attain the several regions have to donate cows of various colours. Since it is said that by donating a cow of a particular colour, one can attain a relavant region attached to that colour. In another chapter,[68] it is said that the gift of cows of various colours leads one to different regions belonging to different deities. For example one making a gift of a cow of Kapilā species yielding good and plenty of milk along with a calf of similar complexion and well-clothed at the back side and of good conduct hails supreme in the region of Brahman. A person making a gift of red-colour (Lohitā) cow of good milk-yielding capacity that has a calf of similar complexion and that is well-clothed at her back side and has good conduct receives high respect in the region of the Sun. By making a gift of a variegated (strong) cow that has a calf of similar complexion and of good milk-yield, that is well-clothed at her back side and of good origin one obtains great honour in the region of Soma. A person who makes a gift of a white (Śveta) cow having the required accomplishments surely succeeds in obtaining the great honours in the abode of Indra. A person gifting a cow of black (Kṛṣṇa) complexion that has all accomplishments is sure to acquire great respect in the abode of Agni.

By making a gift of smoke-coloured cow (Dhūmrā) having all the accomplishments, one is sure to receive great honours in the abode of Yama, while the one making a gift of a cow of the colour of water foam that has a calf, that is well-dressed at her back side, along with a bronze vessel for milking her, is sure to dwell in the regions of Varuṇa. A person who gives away a gift of a cow of the colour of dust raised by the wind, that has a calf, that is well-clothed at her back side, along with a bronze vessel for milking her is sure to receive great honours in the region of Vāyu. By making a gift of a cow having gold-complexion that has her eyes of reddish-brown (pinga) colour that has a calf, that is well-dressed at her back side, along with a bronze vessel for milking her, a person is sure to dwell in the region of Kubera. A person who makes a gift of a cow of the colour of smoke that rises from burnt straw (palāla

dhūmra) that has all the accomplishments, is sure to hail supreme in the region of paternal deities.

A person by making a gift of a cow (Pīvarī) that has a fleshy throat hanging down, that has a calf, that is decorated, is sure to obtain without any trouble the supreme abode of the universal deities (Viśwedevas) while one making a gift of a cow of yellowish complexion (Gourī) that has a calf of similar colour, rich milk yield, and of good demeanour that is covered with a cloth at her back side, is sure to attain the region of Vasus. A person who makes a gift of a cow of the complexion of white blanket that has a calf that is well-dressed at her back side along with a bronze vessel is sure to acquire the region of the Sādhyas.

Thus thirteen colours of cows and the relative merits acquired by each person donating them as a gift are described in extenso. In the same chapter[69] three varieties of bulls and the merit acquired by a person by giving away each as a gift is also described in the following way. A person making a gift of a bull that has a high hump (Vairāṭa Pṛṣṭah) that is adorned with all jewels is sure to attain the region of Maruts, while the one making a gift of a sportive and handsome bull at the prime of his youth decked with all gems, acquires the regions of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs (Apsaras). The one giving away a bull that has a pointed and fleshy throat hanging down adorned with all ornaments endowed with gems, verily succeeds in attaining to the regions of the Lord of Creation (Prajāpati).

A person giving away a Kapilā attains the merit equivalent to the gift of thousand ordinary cows.[70] There are ten varieties of Kapilās[71] differentiated by their complexions. In the same way there are also ten varieties of bulls of Kapilā species. They are respectively first Svarṇa-Kapilā (Kapilā of Golden complexion), Gaurapiṅgala (admixture of light reddish brown), Rakta Piṅgākṣi (reddish-brown-eyed), Gala Piṅgala (reddish-brown necked), Babhru (dark brown), Sveta Piṅgala (light Piṅgala), Rakta Pingāksi (reddish-brown eyed), Kapilā (having hooves of the complexion of palered) and Kapilā with tail of the complexion of brown. These Kapilās are intended for being given as gifts only by Brahmins that too during sacrifices.[72]

In the Ārṣa form of marriage the bridegroom has to offer a

bull and a cow and the father of the bride accepts the gift.[73] This custom was in vogue even from the Smṛti period[74] and the prohibition also has been taught from Smṛti period.

In a conference that took place in heaven long before, gods stated that a person who gives away a thousand cows with horns plated (cased) with gold is sure to reside in heaven[75] while a person who makes a gift of a pair of cows (Goyuga) acquires the reward of mastery over the Vedas.[76] A person who makes a gift of cars and vehicles yoked with cows, acquires the merit attached to the ablution in sacred waters.[77] By making a gift of Kapilā acquired by right means is emphasized owing to its merit of sin-cleansing.[78] The merit of making the gift of the ten thousand cows ensures happiness to the giver along with Indra in heaven.[79] One gifting away hundred thousand cows succeeds in attaining many inexhaustible regions.[80] That person who is used to or is engaged in making gifts of cows is sure to go to heaven on a car of the radiance of the Sun, piercing the group of the clouds and shine there. Thousand celestial women of beautiful hips decorated by attractive dresses and ornaments receive him and please him and he is considered to be the best of all mortals. The celestial maidens of she-deer looks awaken him who goes asleep by their sweet note of vīṇas, the soft musical sounds of their lutes and the audible tinklings of their anklets and their laughter.[81] The donor of thousand cows visits the regions of the Gandharvas and Apsaras where there are many golden palaces and where the celestial Ganges named after Vasu flows.[82] Those persons proceed to such regions of milky rivers that have fresh butter as morass (mud) and that have curd as moss.[83] One interested in giving gifts of cows to the Brahmins is sure to attain heaven[84] and the one used to offer gifts of cows is glorified in heaven for such a stretch of period of years as would be equal to the number of hairs on the bodies of the cows he gives. At the end of his merit such a man takes birth in a noble family.[85] A man who gives away a cow of Kapilā species that has long horns that is covered by a piece of cloth at the rear along with a calf and a bronze vessel, enters devoid of fear the abode of Yama.[86] He who gives away gifts of hundreds of thousands of cows according to the ordinance of

gifts of cows attains the high prosperity eternally and great honours in the next world.[87]

Those persons of pure conduct devoid of pride who donoted gifts of cows are stated to be the considerate performers and donors of all articles, and they are sure to attain the sacred region of cows.[88]

BULL : A person who gives away a bull of good disposition and breed that is capable of bearing burdens that is possessed of strength and young in years and not mischievous and is large in size and energetic is sure to enjoy the regions that are allotted to (reserved for) the donors of cows.[88a]

Gifts of Substitutes of Cows

A person who gives away gifts that are regarded as substitute of cows accrues the merit to actual gift of cows.[89] A person gifting ghee in the form of a cow observing the vow all the while is sure to enjoy the pleasures of rivers of ghee, that approach the donor like a caressing mother approaching her son.[90] Gifts of ghee should be made by every one.[91] In the absence of a cow made of ghee, the gift of a cow made of sesame by a person observing a vow is sure to transcend all calamities in this world and enjoy the pleasures in a milky river.[92] The one giving a gift of a cow made of sesame equal to the measure of an exact cow and water for drinking never suffers misery in the region of Yama.[93] One who makes a gift of water cow enjoys the pleasures of the river of cool and fresh-water.[94] A person donating a sesame cow with horns cased with gold with a Bronze vessel and with honorarium succeeds in attaining to the regions of Vasus.[95]

One aspiring the coveted reward of happiness in the next world, fame and prosperity, purified himself with a cleansed soul, should make a gift of ghee to the Brahmins.[96] Ghee gift done in Aśvins month gratifies the Aśvins, who confer handsomeness to the donor.[97] Rākṣasās never invade the place of that man who makes gift of Pāyasa mixed with ghee to the Bhahmins.[98]

The Place of Donation

The venue for performing the donation of cows to Brahmins for acquiring the required merit is described in the story of Bhagīratha. Bhagīratha made gifts by the side of Puṣkara lakes to Brahmins for a hundred thousand times of two hundred thousand cows.[99] In Puṣkaras especially one should make the gift of a Kapilā cow to a Brahmin.[100] Bhagīratha donated myriads of cows along with their calves to Kohala and could consequently attain the blessed regions—the fruit of his lavish gifts of cows and calves, in the prescribed venue.[101]

Some Auspicious Duties (Pious Obligations)

To Naciketas Yama explained laying stress by repetition on the qualification a donor should first acquire to deserve him worthy of donating a cow. Purity of mind should be the sine qua non to make one eligible to gift a cow and for the attainment of purity of mind, one should have taken to giving away many other gifts and thereby purified his mind.[102] Without such precedents, one is not entitled or qualified to gift away a cow. From this it can well be inferred that one must take to giving away gifts to have precedents created inasmuch as purity of mind comes only through charitable disposition. This is repeated many times by Yama to Naciketas.

It is interesting to note that many purified souls in olden days afraid of the severe tapas (penance) used to make gifts of cows observing the path of gifts of cows according to the extent of their power. They gave up all sentiments that cause jealousy and hatred. With purified heart and soul they engaged themselves in the performance of ceremonial acts in honour of manes and gift of cows as a result of which they could attain heaven and shine in effulgence.[103]

Time of the Donation

One should make gifts of cows earned in a righteous way to deserving Brahmins according to the rites on the day Kāmyāṣṭamī (falling on the eighth day of the Moon).[104]

The one who gifts the cow during the process of calving reaps the merit of giving away land and is therefore adored in heaven for as many thousands of yugas as equal to the bristles on the bodies of the animal and her young one put together.[105] A gift on particular lunations produces merit that is twice as much as a gift on other days. That which is done in a particular season produces merit ten times greater than in other seasons. That done in a particular year produces merit hundred-fold higher than in other years. And lastly, a gift on the last day of the year produces merit that is inexhaustible. A gift also if made while the Sun is on the solstitial points, or made on the last day of the Sun's path through Libra, Aries, Gemini, Virgo, and Pisces, during eclipses—solar or lunar—is inexhaustibly merit-producing. The learned have also said that gifts made during the seasons produce merit that is ten times greater, those made during the change of seasons, a hundred times greater and those made during the days when Rāhu is visible a thousand times greater than what is obtained by way of merit for the gifts made at other times. The gift made on the last day of the Sun's course through Libra and Aries produces merit that knows no bounds or diminution.

A person on rebirth obtains the fruition of whatever objects he has in view at the time of making a gift to Brahmin. Gold has emerged from Fire, the Earth has emerged from Viṣṇu and the Cows have emerged from the Sun. He who gives away gold, land and kine attains all the regions of Agni, Viṣṇu and the Sun. There is nothing so eternal as a gift. Where, therefore, is anything in the three worlds that can excel the merit of these gifts, as held out by the wise and intelligent ![106]

Receiver's Qualifications

The Donor should know minutely the great qualities of a Brahmin to whom the cow is donated. The donor should select a Brahmin who is devoted to Vedānta and endowed with great knowledge. The Brahmin must be having contentment, restraints over senses and of good character and conduct, taken to the adherence to the vows strictly. He must have detachment with the worldly meums and must be speaking sweetly to all beings.

He must be of a spotless character with not even a single stigma of misdeed attached to him though incited by hunger. He must be a calm-going person and not provoked easily and must also be hospitable to all guests.[107] Similarly the donor should also be endowed with similar noble virtues and qualities prescribed for the receiver.[108] The donor should have his family and children too.[109] That Brahmin, who is endowed with Vedic learning and severe penance and who is a performer of sacrifices may be regarded as a proper person to be the recipient of such cow-gifts.[110] But cows should never be given to a Brahmin in whose house they have to suffer from cold and heat.[110a] Cows should never be offered to a sinful person and one who tills the land yoking bulls much less to a butcher who slaughters them. One who gives the cows away to such persons, has to rot in hell for ever.[111] The receiver is sure to acquire great merit if he accepts gifts from poor householders as the cows are deemed to have been rescued from distress. The poor owner cannot afford to rear and protect them in the manner required due to insufficient means.[112] The Brahmin who receives the cows should cherish favourable conduct towards the cows and he should subsist upon them only and not upon anything else and he must be grateful to the donor always.[113]

Qualifications of Cows

The next point for consideration is the characteristics of a quality cow to be given to a deserving Brahmin, which is of utmost importance. One should never give to a Brahmin a cow that is lean or that produces short-lived calves or is afflicted with any disease, or crippled or decrepit.[114] One should give away a cow that gives profuse milk, that behaves well and famous for her docile and other qualities to make it worthy of her, so that the donee may enjoy the gift to his heart's content. Then alone the gift is worth its name as it serves the real purpose to the letter and spirit.

A cow that is taken in exchange by offering other animals or that is won by prowess (in war) of arms, that is taken as marriage dower or from the other relations[115] is considered worthy of gifts, provided she is not vicious, but is capable of

bringing forth good calves and not taken to running away from the owner's house. A person that gives such a cow with a bronze vessel for milking her enjoys the comforts of heaven for a period of years as many as there are hairs on the body of that cow.[116] Elsewhere, the qualities of a cow fit for gift are described with a slight difference. One has to offer a cow that is accompanied by a calf of its own, that is endowed with docility and other qualities and that is young in age, and wrapped with a cloth.[117] One should never offer a cow that is incapable of drinking and eating, that has her milk already yielded (dry) that is having very inherent weaknesses or diseases or is nearer to death. Such a cow may be compared to a tank whose water is dried up, unfit for use. By offering such a cow one is sure to enter into the dark hell.[118] A cow that is wrathful or vicious or diseased or not purchased after the payment of a proper price should never be given as gift, as such a gift affects the giver by landing him in distress and sorrow and the regions he attains would not give him any happiness or vigour expected of them.[119]

Occasions for the Gift of Cows

There are some special occasions,[120] in which a person should give away a cow to a Brahmin viz., when an old man becomes ill, when famine takes place, when a Brahmin wishes to perform a sacrifice, when a person wants to till a land, when one gets a son after performing a sacrifice, or for the livelihood of a preceptor, for the sustenance of anybody's child born in the legitimate way (these are the proper occasions when) a cow should be given away to a noble Brahmin by the owner of the cow according to the rituals laid down by the Scriptures. The same person acquires the foremost regions also as a result of such a gift. But a person who does not follow the rituals in respect of the gift can not acquire those regions.[121]

Donor's Special Qualities (Cow-Gift—the Great Merit)

A person who never even thinks of injuring a cow but is always disposed towards the cow compassionately attains the merits attached to persons observing the vow of truth. If such a person

gives away a single cow, he is sure to acquire merit on par with that of the gift of thousand cows.[122] And a Kṣatriya by doing so obtains the merit equal to that of a Brahmana. A Vaiśya of similar accomplishments on such a gift is eligible to the merit attached to the gift of a five hundred cows.[123] If a Sudra possessed of similar conduct makes the gift, the merit equivalent to the gift of one hundred and twenty-five cows is attributable.[124]

Donor's Qualifications

A person who is devoted to penances and truth, who is proficient in scriptures and religious acts by serving duly his preceptor and is endowed with noble virtues like forgiveness of disposition, worshipping deities, and who is of tranquil soul, who is pure, enlightened and observant of all the duties, exempt from egoism, is sure to attain great merit by making a gift of a cow according to rituals.[125]

A person who takes only one meal a day and saves the money allotted for the other, while practising Go-Vrata for ten years, making a gift of a cow purchased legitimately by him attains the merit attached to the gift of as many number of cows as there are hairs on the body of that cow.[126] A Kṣatriya after purchasing a cow in like manner and practising Go-Vrata for five years is sure to acquire the merit of a Brahmin; while a Vaiśya in the same circumstances acquires the same measure of merit by observing Go-Vrata for two and a half years and a Śūdra by observing Go-Vrata for fifteen months.[127]

A person who sells himself and purchases cows with that money and gives them away to Brahmins enjoys felicity in heaven for as long as cows are seen on earth. It is said in every hair of such cows, there is a region of inexhaustible felicity.[128] A person is sure to win the equivalent merit attached to the person who sells himself and makes gift of cows, when he offers the cows acquired in the battle.[129]

Even the one offering a gift of a stolen cow to a Brahmin is sure to enjoy felicity in heaven, of course, not without subjecting himself to suffer in hell for the sin of theft for the like period.[130] By making a gift of cows, one rescues his ancestors as well as descendants to the seventh degree,[131] while by making

gifts of cows with the honorarium of gold, one rescues his ancestors and descendants to the fourteenth degree.[132]

Sixteen Kinds of Charity that are Futile[133]

The gift to a person who has fallen away from the practice of virtuous vows, the gift of wealth that is ill-gotten (earned unlawfully), the gift to a sinful Brahmin or to a thief or to a preceptor who is a false-pretender, the gift to a person who is not truthful but sinful, or ungrateful, the gift to a person that officiates at sacrifices conducted by all classes of people, living in a village or to a teacher who preaches Veda for mercinary ends, or one that works for Śūdras, the gift to a Brahmin who is not observing and performing the duties of his order, the gift to one that has married a girl of pubescience (after her accession to puberty), the gift to a woman or to one who plays with snakes or one who is employed in menial offices. The gifts offered to the sixteen tabooed recipients would never be merit-yielding. If, however, out of ignorance, or due to fear or anger, one gives away gifts to them, the merit of such gifts will be enjoyed by him while he is in the womb of his mother. In other cases, a person who makes a gift to the Brahmins enjoys the fruit of it in his old age. Therefore, one who wishes to travel the way of heaven should by all means make gifts only to Brahmins worthy of being a fit Receiver, whatever be the gift made.

Donor's Obligations

The person who desires to give away a cow to a Brahmin must select a preceptor also who guides him in the matter of the gift of a cow. Such a person is sure to dwell in heaven.[134] It is the first and foremost duty of the donor because all the other rituals invariably depend upon it as a concomitant factor. Later he has to select a meritorious Brahmin to receive his gift. However, the donor has to request a noble Brahmin to accept it. Because the donor obtains the sixth part of the merit won by the receiver by his penance, when he makes a gift to such a Brahmin with great reverence, and restrained senses.[135] The donor should be righteous also in his conduct. Otherwise a Brahmin of pure

conduct should never approach him. Brahmins accept gifts from the righteous and unrighteous. If the giver happens to be righteous, the receiver incurs a little sin. But, if the giver happens to be unrighteous, the receiver goes to hell.[136] Only five types of persons who commit vicious acts should never get the merit of making gifts. Those of sinful conduct must be regarded as the worst of persons. One should never talk even with them. They should be relinquished or shunned from society. Those five persons are categorised here. One who slays a Brahmin, one who slays a cow, one who seduces other people's wives, who has no faith in the Vedas and who subsists on the virtue of his wife.[137] These five persons of sinful behaviour, when they visit the abode of the dead rot in hell like insects, that live upon pus and blood.[138] Hence, the donor must be righteous; otherwise he causes the receiver also to go to hell.

The donor has to give up all sorts of food and subsist on water only for three nights.[139] He has to sleep on the bare earth. He has to feed the cow properly and then donate along with her calf. He has to gratify the Brahmin with other gifts also.

VARIOUS MEANS TO ACQUIRE COWS FOR GIFT

The Relative Merits attached to Such Gifts on the Donors

A person who makes gifts of cows by outright purchase with the ancestral wealth or by legitimate means attains many immutable regions of great felicity[140] by his act, and a person gifting cows with the wealth won at dice (gambling) is sure to enjoy felicity for ten thousand years of celestial measure.[141] Those who make gifts of cows acquired legitimately attains many eternal regions of beautitude (blessedness).[142]

The Ritual of the Cow Gift

This ritual has come into practice from very old times for the benefit of good persons exclusively. Later on, it is declared for the benefit of all creatures.[143] It was practised even before

it was preached. It is said that Maṁdhatṛ once questioned Bṛhaspati (the preceptor of deities) about this ritual, whereupon Bṛhaspati explained[144] that the donor should intimate the time (a day before the gift) and honour the Brahmins. Thus appointing them for the gift all the while with restrained senses he should address the cow of the variety of Rohiṇi as 'samaṅgā' and 'Bahulā'; entering the midst of the cows he should recite this Sṛti

> *'Gourme mātā vṛṣabhaḥ pitāme Divam Śarma Jagatī me Pratiṣṭha'*
>
> M.B. (Anusa) 76-7

meaning the cow is my mother, the bull is my father. (Give me heaven and worldly pleasures.) The cow (Jagatī) is my refuge. After reciting this Sṛti he should reside there for the night so as to be absolved of all his sins and to become one with the cows. At sun-rise he should give away the cow along with the calf and a bull. As a result of the said act he is sure to reach heaven. The blessings contained in the mantras also belong to the donor. The mantras which refer to the cows are the following :

> *'Urjāśvinyaḥ ūrjamedhasca yajñe garbhoamṛtasya jagatoasya pratiṣṭha*
> *Kṣiterohaḥ prava-haśśaśvadeva prājāpatyāḥ sarvamityartha vādaḥ*
> *Gavo mamainaḥ praṇudantu sauryāstathā savmyāḥ svargayānāya santu*
> *Ātmānam mātṛvaccāśrayantu tathanuktāssantu sarvasiṣome*
> *Seṣotsarge karmabhirdehamokṣe sarasvatyaśśreyase sampravṛttāḥ*
> *Yūyam Nityam sarvapuṇyopavāhyaṁ Disadhvaṁ Gatimiṣtāṁ prasannāḥ'*
>
> 10 to 12

The donor has to recite the following mantras first half of the

verse, while giving the cow to the Brahmin:

> '*Yo vai yūyam sohamadyaikabhāvo yuṣmāndatvacāhamātma· pradātā*'

Then the Brahmin (receiver) has to recite the latter part receiving the gift in the following way:

> '*Manaścyutāmanaevopapannāḥ sandhukṣadhvam saumyarūpograrupāḥ*'

The ritual relating to the substitutes of the cow is described.[145] When a cow is not available, a person who wishes to give away the usual cost of the cow as a substitute of the cow has to utter the word 'urdhvāsya' meaning that the cow with face uplifted is being offered. The person who gives away cloth as the substitute of a cow should utter the word 'bhavitavyā' meaning that the gift should be considered as a cow. A person who gives away gold has to utter 'vaiṣṇavī' meaning that the gold is the form of a cow.

The Merits of the Gift of Substitute Cows[146]

The person who offers the cost of a cow enjoys heaven for a period of thirty-six thousand years. The person who offers gold as a substitute of the cow enjoys twenty thousand years. But the person who offers a real cow succeeds in acquiring the merits attached to the vicarious gifts. The merits are verily vouchsafed to him when the receiver places eight steps after receiving the gift. A person who gives away a cow may be regarded as endowed with right conduct. A person who gives the value becomes fearless. A person who offers (Vasu) wealth never meets with sorrow.

End of the Ritual

The donor after giving away the gift has to subsist for three days on only milk and refrain from every kind of food.[147] This topic relating to the gift of cows is fraught with sanctity.[148]

The gift of cows is held high and praiseworthy in almost all

Purāṇas. Particularly in the Padma Purāṇa, Skānda Purāṇa, Garuḍa Purāṇa, Agnipurāṇa and in Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa, this subject is at length dealt with. According to a Purāṇa,[149] the giver of a cow with costly clothes and many gems at the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna to a Brahmin dressed in white garbs, serene in nature, well-versed in religion and Vedas is sure to be glorified in heaven for as many thousand years as there are hairs on the body of that cow. Wherever he is reborn, the cow also takes her birth in his house along with him. As a result of his gift, he would never be consigned to hell. Another purāṇa holds[150] that a person offering a cow, land and gold on the banks of the Ganges with ardent devotion will never take a rebirth in this mortal world, full of miseries. The inference can well be drawn from the above purāṇa that a person is sure to get salvation after making such a gift of a cow along with the gifts of land and gold. The Garuḍa Purāṇa says[151] that a person gifting a cow to a Brahmin is sure to reside in heaven besides being sure to acquire opulence in the next birth. According to another purāṇa[152] a person making a gift of a cow is sure to obtain longevity, health and prosperity in this world as well in heaven after he leaves this world. Another purāṇa[153] lays added emphasis on the gift of a cow by saying that one gifting a a cow—whether in milk or not—which is healthy, strong and vigorous is glorified in heaven.

Offering a cow with all the accomplishments to a fitting Brahmin is sure to have the complete merit equal to the gift of the entire earth.[154] The giver of a milch cow is glorified in Vaikunṭha for such number of years as there are hairs on the body of the cow. If the offer is made on any auspicious day, the merit is four-fold high, if done in holy places the merit is multiplied by hundred times, and if done in the precincts of Nārāyāṇa the merit is million-fold increased. In the Bharatakhaṇḍa, one offering a cow with reverence is glorified in the region of Candra for a period of ten thousand years.[155]

An offer of a Kapilā species with a calf decked with all varieties of gems according to the ritual makes one visit Viṣṇuloka.[156] The performance of severe austerity and penance is the supreme duty which is laudable in the age of Kṛta; acquisition of knowledge is the prime duty in Treta, resorting

to holy places is the duty in the Dwāpara but charity is the only duty in the age of Kali.[157]

To Whom Should the Cow-Gift be Made—Receiver's Qualifications

The receiver should be a Brahmin. It is seen from a Purāṇa that the gifts of sesame and cows are great and sin-cleansing, and both should be offered only to Brahmins and not to persons of other castes, and who serve the giver.[158] Foremost among the Brahmins are the fitting persons who regularly perform and consecrate the Brahmanical rites. The best even among those are the Brahmins who know the supreme Brahman and who are endowed with rigorous penances.[159] However, one should offer along with the cow, her calf according to the ritual to a Brahmin, that is well-versed in the Vedas, virtuous, pious and is a worshipper of Viṣṇu, and is a scholar observing non-violence. Offering a cow to a Brahmin alone is not all; the Brahmin should have all the virtues specified above to qualify himself a worthy receiver. Here the importance of selecting a fit receiver is made out, perhaps to ensure the pious obligations are carried out literally and properly by the receiver and the benefit of a cow enjoyed by him deservedly.[160]

A Brahmin with no erudition or tinge to probe into the spiritual knowledge is not entitled to accept any gift. Furthermore, by his accepting any gift, he degrades the donor as well as his own soul.[161]

One should never offer a cow to a Brahmin, who sells the products of cows, and who is not devoted to cows and not endowed with the qualities of a prescribed recipient of cow gift.[162] Thus the necessity to scrutinise closely and comb out the fitting Brahmin to make a gift of cow to him lies heavily on the person aspiring to donate a cow. Thus to a proper and fit person alone the gift of a cow is recommended is made clear.[163]

Qualifications of the Cow

The requisite qualifications of the cow intended to be gifted

away are important for consideration. It is held that the giver of a healthy and disease-free cow with or without a calf is glorified in heaven.[161] Somewhere it is also stated that one should however make a gift of a cow whether she yields or does not yield milk, but she should be healthy and vigorous.[165] The only bar is one should never offer to a Brahmin a cow that is crippled, that drinks her udders, that is old, that has been already milked away, that is decrepit and has proved herself to be a wreck or that is having disease or deformity proving to be not of good demeanour unsteady or of a run-away nature, that is robbed off a Brahmin for fear of being doomed to hell by such an act.

Donor's Qualifications (Merits)

The donor considered fit to gift away a cow must be healthy person. If he is a sickly person, he has to make a gift of hundred cows and if he is on the verge of death he has to make a gift of thousand cows, otherwise after his death atleast his relations have to make a gift of hundred thousand cows which equals the merit of a single cow given by a healthy person. By the above description, it is evident that a single cow offered by a healthy person, hundred cows offered by a sickly person, thousand cows offered by a dying person, hundred thousand cows offered by his relatives after the death of a person are of equal merit.[166]

The gift given not according to the ritual does not bear fruit. Even a gift of a single cow in the proper place intended and to the proper receiver is equal to the merit attached to the gift of a hundred thousand cows.[167] The merit of such a gift increases day by day. When the gift is given to an improper receiver that renders the giver ineffective and harmful as he would have to go to hell. Alike the receiver too along with his twenty-one generations to come shall have to go to hell.[168]

Exceptions

Brahmins who suffer from poverty many receive gifts from royal caste. If the kings deny them the offer, they may receive the

cows from Vaiśyas. But one should never accept any gift from a person belonging to the Śūdra community.[169]

Expiation of the Receiver

The sin of accepting a gift from the hand of an evil or a dishonest giver is atoned by his constantly repeating the 'Gāyatrī' Mantra for month in a cow-shed or pasturage and in perfect mastery over his senses.[170]

Anything offered by a eunuch, by a man or woman of questionable morals, as well as one offered by one's enemy, should be unconditionally rejected except for the purpose of performing any religious ceremony or performing obsequies of one's own father.[171] The offer of very black Kapilā should not be made on Brahmins.[172]

Proper Occasion of the Gift

A gift should be made daily to a worthy receiver, as well as on special occasions. Any person is morally bound to give something in charity to a person who solicits his help in straitened circumstances, within his means and in a devout spirit.[173] It is clear from a Purāṇa that while a person has the transient life (while he is alive) he should perform everything that rescues him in the other world. When he has to traverse the other world through the dreadful path, he should be accompanied with the necessities of a traveller.[174] Otherwise, on the way he suffers a lot, for want of the things that are useful to make his way easy to pass.[175] A cow named Vaitariṇī of either black or pale-red should be given to a Brahmin according to the ritual. She is referred to as the river which confers happiness on the departed soul. That cow thus offered comes to the succour of the donor when he has to cross the path of the dreadful hell. Those who offer a Vaitariṇī cow are sure to obtain their wishes, along with happiness in this world and the world to come.[176] The same purāṇa stresses the inevitability of the cow gift by every body during his life-time itself. After his death, it is doubtful whether his relatives would make a gift or not. So by way of abundant caution, it is desirable that everybody

should make the gift of a cow 'Vaitariṇī' with his own hand to have her assured succour on his way to the other world.[177]

The path to Yamaloka (hell) is eighty-six yojanas. There is a famous river by name Vaitaraṇī divided into two parts. While blood flows through one side, whetted weapons flow through the middle part of that river. On the point of death when one offers a cow to a Brahmin, he can cross through the river with ease by holding the tail of that cow; while others have to cross through the river by their hands all the hundred yojanas. The second flow of the Vaitaraṇī is destined for the travel of good and righteous persons. Those who make gift of cows on the point of death cross the river of plentiful water holding the tail of the cow. Those who do not perform the cow gift have to cross the river by their own hands. On account of this, particularly one should make a gift of a cow on the point of death with a desire to cross the river safely.[178]

Gift of a Bull

A person who offers a vigorous bull to a Brahmin undoubtedly obtains the merit equally attached to the gift of ten cows.[179] But according to Agnipurāṇa, it is made clear that a person, by making the gift of ten cows of Kapilā species, at the sacred place Jyeṣṭa (great) Puṣkara, acquires equal merit attached to liberation of a bull.[180] A person who offers a bullock is sure to go to heaven.[181]

In the same Purāṇa the gift of either a cow or an ox is said to be of equal merit. The donor is sure to get salvation after a happy career on earth by making a gift of either a cow or an ox to a Brahmin.[182] Thus it will be seen that it makes little difference whether one offers a gift of a cow or an ox the merit being one and the same.

Substitutes for Cows

The gift and the merit attached to them are described in a purāṇa.[183] The gifts of the ten varieties of substitute-cows are described. They are Guḍadhenu (the cow of the treacle), Ghṛtadhenu (the cow of clarified butter), Tiladhenu (the cow of

sesame), Jaladhenu (the water cow), Kṣīradhenu (the cow of thickened milk), Madhudhenu (the cow of honey), Śarkaradhenu (the cow of sugar), Dadidhenu (the cow of curd), Rasadhenu (the cow of sweetened juice) and the tenth is the very cow. A person who offers a substitute for a cow gets himself purified and attains salvation after a long and a happy career on earth. Along with all such substitutes, a living milch cow with her horns plated with gold hoofs covered with silver along with a brass vessel should be given away as honorarium. The giver of such a cow is sure to live in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of the cow.[184]

The Gift of Cow's of Different Complexions and the Merit Thereof

In a Purāṇa ten cows that are having different complexions are said to have different relative merits attached to them.[185] By donating a Śveta (white) cow a person would become an emperor and live in a palace, always enjoying the pleasures and comforts. By donating the Dhūmra (smoky) cow a person is cleansed of his sins in full. By donating a Kapilā (tawny) one gets inexhaustible merit. By donating a black cow one never gets ruined. To donate a Pāṇḍura (pale-coloured) though it is rare and difficult to obtain one, is worthy of all. The donation of a Gourī (yellow) cow causes delight to one's dynasty. A red-eyed-cow-donation brings in handsomeness on the donor. A blue cow is gifted for affluence.

Special Merits Attached to the Gift of Kapila

By donating a Kapilā (tawny-coloured-cow) a person will be redeemed from all his sins. The sins committed either in his childhood or old age or by mind or by speech or deed, the sin committed by incest or the sin by betraying a friend or the sin of fraud played in measuring goods (inferior in quality) or of balancing a thing or the sin acquired by telling a lie with or for a girl or to protect a cow—all the sins committed by these acts will be redeemed by donating a Kapilā.

Different Regions and Different Complexions of Cows

Another Purāṇa[186] describes the gifts of several cows of different complexions. Each complexion has its own end to reach the particular region assigned. A gift of a white-complexioned cow is glorified in the region of Soma, a red coloured cow gift is glorified in Vibhāvasu, a black cow in the region of Yama, a blue-coloured-cow-gift is glorified in the region of Varuṇa, a Śabalā or Rohiṇī cow-gift is glorified in the region of Vāyu, a smoky coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Vasus, an Āṣaḍha coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Varuṇa. A gold coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Kubera, a copper coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Aṅgīrasa. A palaladhūmra coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of manes. A Goura-coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Bhṛgu, a Vairāṭa-coloured-cow gift is glorified in the region of Prajāpati, a white-blanket coloured cow gift is glorified in the region of Rudras. A person offering a cow of the complexion of black, with white spots is glorified in the region of Gandharvas, while one offering a cow of the complexion of Kapilā (Tawny) is glorified in the region of the donor's taste. Previously all these cows were of Kapilā complexion but due to a curse of Śaṁbhu they were made of variegated colours.[187] The self-same Purāṇa ascertains the greatness of Kapilā and it is considered as the best of all the cow-species. Of all the varieties of bulls, the bull of white complexion stands the foremost[188] and a gift of such a bull is met with assured immense merit.

Some Important Points Relating to Cow Gifts

In the Garuḍa Purāṇa some salient points worth consideration and adoption both by the donor and the donee are elaborated. The gift of a cow or a girl or a bed should be given to only one person. Either one of them if sold or given to many is fraught with degeneration of as many as seven generations of the donor.[189] A person who does not liberate a bull even though he has a son, he cannot get salvation after death. But a person who liberates a bull properly though devoid of children, travels

safely and securely through the path of dreadful hell with ease.[190]

One should never offer a cow or a house or a cot with all its peraphernalia to many persons. The honorarium of these gifts when given to many persons will drive the donor to hell. A person who offers the above gifts properly is glorified in heaven for a period of hundred celestial years.[191]

Even poor persons when they are sick should donate cows, sesame, gold and the seven varieties of corns.[192] Having seen a liberal person all the gods along with the sages and with the God of Dharma and his assistant Citragupta, experience various joys and pleasures.[193]

Exception

A brahmin should make a gift of gold, a cow or an ox to a religious assembly (group).[194] The same gift in twofold by a Kṣatriya, in threefold by a Vaiśya and in fourfold by a Śūdra. The four castes by doing so in the degree prescribed are redeemed from their sins.[195]

Sixteen Great Gifts 'Mahadanas' in the Tulapurusa

Tulapuruṣa gift includes sixteen great gifts[196] viz., the gift of Hirṇyagarbha, Kalpavṛkṣa, golden car with golden horse harnessed to it, golden chariot with golden elephant yoked to it, five ploughs, adequate measure of ground to drive the same, disc of Viṣṇu, Kalpalatā, Saptasāgaraka, Ratnadhenu and Mahābhūtaghaṭa all are prescribed as worthy gifts to the Brahmins on auspicious days.

The Matsyapurāṇa[197] states that the Mahādānas were performed by such ancient heroes and kings as Vāsudeva, Aṁbarīṣa. Bhārgava, Kartavīryārjuna, Rāma, Prahlāda, Pṛthu and Bharata.

Brahmamda[198]

In this Dana, gifts of ten cows with golden tipped horns, with copper vessels (for milking them) and covered with garments should be made.

Gosahasra[199]

The donor should subsist for three days or one day on milk and milk alone and then the preliminary procedure of invoking lokapālas, Puṇyāhavacana, home etc., should be applied to the body of a bull after making it stand on the altar. Out of one thousand cows, ten are selected and are covered with clothes and their horns decorated with gold-tips and their hoofs with silver-tips and are brought inside the pandal and honoured. A golden image of Nandikeśvara (Śiva's bull) with golden bells around its neck covered with silk, scents and flowers showered on it, gold-tip provided to horns should be placed in the midst of the ten cows. After bathing in medicated water (Sarvauṣadhi herb) and with flowers in his folded hands, the donor should invoke the cows with mantras expressing the greatness of cows and address the image of Nandikeśvara as Dharma and should bestow the golden image of Nandi on the Guru with two cows and donate one each to eight priests and to the other Brahmins five or ten cows each out of the remaining. The owner should then subsist on milk for one day and would dwell in the world of Śiva and save his pitṛs and maternal grandfathers and other maternal ancestors.

Kamadhenu[200]

The figures of a cow and a calf should be made of very pure pristine gold weighing either a thousand or five hundred or two hundred fifty palas and if one is not well to-do, at least of three palas in the minimum. The skin of a black antelope should be spread over the altar, a prastha of jaggery is kept thereon and on it a golden cow should be placed, well decked with jewels, surrounded by eight auspicious jars, fruits, eighteen kinds of grains, chowries, copper vessel, lamps, and umbrella, two silken garments, bells, neck ornaments etc. The donor should invoke the cow with pauraṇika mantras and then make a gift of the cow and calf to the Guru.

Hiranyasvaratha[201]

A golden chariot is donated along with chowries, an umbrella, silken garments and cows according to one's mite.

Pancalangalaka[202]

Five plough shares should be made of some strong wood (teak, sandal etc.) and five of gold, ten fine oxen should be decked with gold on their horns and with pearls on their tails, silver on their hoofs and a gift of these and of land equal to one Kharvāṭa, kheṭa or village or a gift of one hundred or fifty nivartanas according to one's mite should be made.

Mahakalpalata[203]

There should be ten cows and vessels. Two should be bestowed on the Guru and the remaining eight on eight priests.

Ratnadhenu[204]

The figure of a cow is to be made of precious stones. eighty-one padmaraga (ruby) stones are to be placed in the mouth of that figure, a hundred Puṣparāga stone in the tip of her nose a golden tilaka on her forehead, a hundred pearls in the eyes, a hundred pieces of coral on the two eyebrows, two pieces of mother-pearl represent the ears, there should be golden horns and the head should be of one hundred diamond stones, with one hundred on her neck, one hundred sapphires on the back, a hundred lapis lazuli on the sides, a crystal on the belly, a hundred saugandhika stones on the waist. Hoofs of gold and tail of pearls and other parts of the cow's body are to be represented in a similar manner with various precious stones and the tongue with sugar and dung with jaggery, urine with ghee and a calf is to be made with one fourth of what is required for the cow and then both are donated.

The Gift of Cow-Products

Merudānam[205] (thousand droṇa measure of paddy and the allied substances consisting of half measure less than the substance immediately preceding it in number), viz. Lavaṇaparvata (the hill of Salt), Guḍadri, Svarṇameru, Tilādri, Karpāsācala (cotton), Ghṛtācala (Ghee), Rajatācala (Silver) and Śarkracala (Sugar).

By making a gift of either the milk or curd or buttermilk of a cow a person is sure to obtain great satiety.[206] In Āśvayuja month, an offer of them to Brahmins would make the donor healthy,[207] and if the offer be curd, good benefits would shower on the donor.[208] A person who offers milk is relieved from all his miseries and becomes satisfied.[209] By consecrating milk to Śiva one can be relieved of all his agonies besides being glorified in the region of Rudra.[210] By offering the rice boiled in milk, one can have the fulfilment of all his desires.[211] If ghee is consecrated to Śiva, miseries vanish and the person offering will be glorified in the region of Rudra.[212] By offering ghee one is sure to reside in heaven.[213] In Āśvayuja month daily offer of ghee in the morning to a Brahmin to gratify the Brahmin and Aśvins make one rid of diseases and at the same time builds up good form.[214] The gift of a vessel full of thickened (concentrated) milk and clarified butter in the month of Āśvayuja ensures celestial existence to the offerer.[215]

By consecrating butter to Rāmanātha Mahāliṅga one casts off the need to visit Yama (hell)[216] and by consecrating milk one uplifts himself and a twenty dynasties of his are glorified in Śivaloka.[217] By consecrating curd, one besides being able to be redeemed of his sins, attains great fame in the abode of Viṣṇu.[218]

Cow Gift as an Expiation by a Killer of a Brahmin

A killer of a Brahmin shall make the gift of a milch cow with milk, after fasting and reciting 'Aghamarṣaṇa Mantra' for three days standing in water and recite the ṛk beginning as 'obeissance

to Soma' observing a fast on the next day and cast forty libations of clarified butter in the sacrificial fire.[219]

Cow Gift by an Encroacher of Land

A person who takes away the lands of others will become absolved of the sin by an offer of a million cows.[220]

Cow Gift by a Cow Stealer

A person guilty of stealing a cow belonging to others should never be atoned even by offering hundred cows.[221]

Cow Gift by a Cow-Killer

A cow killer shall practise self-control for a month, staying in the cow-shed with cows therein. Daily he has to lead them to pastures. He has to take the compound Pañcagavya (milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung are the five things derived from cow). On his offering a cow to a Brahmin, he ultimately atones the sin.[222]

Cow Gift by the Killer of a Ksatriya

A person who kills Kṣatriya (royal community) shall have to offer a bull and a thousand cows,[223] besides practising the same vow of a killer of a Brahmin for 3 years.[224] A killer of a Śūdra has to practise this vow for six months and offer ten cows.[225] A killer of a pious lady has to practise the vow of a killer of a Śūdra and offer ten cows in the same manner.[226]

Cow Gift in the Sacrifices and Vratas

At the close of the sacrifice regarding the installation of images, the sacrificer shall have to make a gift of a cow of the Kapilā species Cowri, ear-rings, umbrella, bracelet etc., to the priest.[227] According to the Agnipurāṇa at the end of the installation of the images of all the gods, the sacrificer should make gifts of a vessel full of sesame, gold and a cloth and with

a cow decked with ornaments reciting the mantra 'Prīyatām Bhagavān Viṣṇuḥ'.[228]

Graha-Yajna

Graha-Yajña should be performed for the propitiation of planets. This Yajña confers wealth, peace and prosperity on the sacrificer.[229] It is usually divided into three types according to the number of libations of clarified butter cast into the fire.[230] In the first type of Graha-Yajña a person performing this sacrifice has to offer ten thousand libations of clarified butter into the fire. In the second (generally on occasions of marriage ceremony) hundred thousand libations of clarified butter should be offered into the fire. In the third a million of libations of clarified butter are offered. At the end, the sacrificer should make gifts of golden cows to the Brahmins. He should address the celestial cow Kapilā 'Oh Kapilā you who are worshipped by all the gods and in whose body all the gods and sacred shrines are present, will confer peace on me.' It is performed by installing a divine image or edifice. The usual remuneration of a golden cow etc., should be given. The sacrifice is intended to propitiate planets in order to vouchsafe a victory in war to the performer.[231] It is known from the Garuḍa Purāṇa that in the Homa ceremonies celebrated for the propitiation of the planets, the sacrificer should offer as honorarium to the Brahmins, who officiate the ceremonies a cow for the propitiation of the Sun, a conch-shell for the Moon, an ox for Mars, gold for Mercury, cloth for the Jupiter, a horse for Venus, a Black cow for Saturn, iron for Rāhu and a goat for Ketu.[232] Even a King derives many benefits from worshipping the planets.[233]

Sadgati Vrata

One should perform a Vrata on the day of the eighth phase of the moon and break his fast on the night of the Vow. A person who continually practises the Vrata for a year should complete it by making the gift of a cow to a Brahmin. As a result of it he would be elevated to the status of Indra, after his death.

This is known as Sadgativrata.[234] The same Vrata practised on the day of the eighth phase of the moon's increase in the month of Puṣya is called the Mahā Rudra Vrata.[235] Such a Vrata practised in honour of Brahma is ten thousand times more meritorious than the one practised for an ordinary end.[236] The Vrata should invariably be performed if the proper day of its celebration falls on a Wednesday, as its performance would ensure endless prosperity on the votary.[237]

Krsnastami

This Vrata is performed on the eighth day of the New Moon in the month of Māgha. It should also be performed in the succeeding months till Kārtīka, and break the fast in the night of all the Aṣṭamī days in a year and make gifts of cows to Brahmins at the end of this Vrata,[238] so as to be assured of the region of Indra.[239]

Prabha Vrata

One making a gift of Treacle in the month of Māgha or Caitra on the third days of the respective fortnights is said to be observing Prabhāvrata. One performing Guḍavrata is verily glorified in the region of Gowrī. Forsooth this Vrata is considered great as conferring the supreme bliss on the Penitent. Observing the fast in the fortnights and bestowing a pair of Kapilā cows on a Brahmin ensures the region of Brahma after being duly worshipped by deities as well as by demons. After a period of Kalpa, he becomes Lord of all enjoying all pleasures. This is called Prabhāvrata.[240]

Visnu Vrata

A person worshipping Brahmins in this Vrata, to the extent of his means offering cows, clothes and gold to them paves way to attain sublimest regions.[241]

Gowri Vrata

On the completion of Gowrī Vrata one should arrange a dinner with white rice, besides offering a pair of costly clothes and an auspicious cow to a Brahmin.[242] This Vrata connected with Śiva should not be disclosed to impure, egoistic, those vehemently condemning cows, Brahmins, deities, guests and religious persons.[243] At the end of the vow a bed with all equipments should be offered with the images of Umā and Saṅkara along with a bull and a cow.[244]

Purnima Vrata

One should make a gift of one hundred cows when observing this Vrata, and he is blessed with all comforts in Heaven.[245] A scholar offering a cow of clarified butter according to the ritual obtains all wishes and fame.[246] A person offering a Rasadhenu (a cow of sweetened juice) in the month of Kārtīka is vouchsafed with all his objects longed by him besides a good resort.[247]

Kartika Vrata

The Kārtīka Vrata is observed in the month of Kārtīka and best type of cow should be offered at the end of the Vow.[248]

Kapila Sastivrata

A person who performs ablution in the great river Kapiladhara and makes a gift of a cow of the Kapilā species on the day of Kapilaṣaṣṭi obtains the merit equivalent to the gift of a crore cows.[249] This is stated to be an expiation of all sins committed by the donor.[250]

Sivaratri Vrata

The vow of Śivaratri should be completed after making a gift of a black and healthy cow along with her calf, decked with clothes ornaments, bells etc., to a Brahmin.[251]

Cow Gift in the Holy Places

The Forest of Dhenuka

A person who visits the Goddess Dhenuka in the forest named after a cow-Goddess should perform obsequial rites in honour of his deceased manes. There he should make a gift of a cow of sesame that vouchsafes residence in the region of Brahma to his manes.[252] Such an act (cow-gift) at any of the following sacred places vouchsafes the same merit to the performer. Places: Aindra Tīrtham, the Naratīrtham, the Vaiṣṇava Tīrtham or Mahā-Nandī bank.[253]

The River Vaitaraṇī

The illustrious river Vaitaraṇī in the three worlds is descended from heaven to the holy place Gaya, which absolves all souls of departed manes. A person who performs obsequial rites or makes the gift of a cow for the benefit of his ancestors that reside on the banks of that sacred stream rescue the souls of one and a twenty generations of his ancestors.[254]

Chakratīrtha

Ablution in the sacred lake named Chakratīrtha and offer of a cow will be one that will relieve him from all obstacles. Along with cow gift one should also make a gift of a symbol of Śiva. By this even those who never so much as think of a gift of a cow are considered to become purified.[255]

The River Ganges

An offer of a cow with her calf on the banks of the river Ganges according to the ritual enables one to enjoy all comforts for a period of as many yugas as there are hairs on the body of that cow. He also enjoys all his cherished wishes and pleasures along with his relatives, friends and ancestors in the Śivaloka or Goloka by the grace of Kāmadhenu and takes rebirth in a rich and noble family.[256]

Rukmini Tirtha

An offer of the best cow of Kapilā species according to the ritual is sure to enable one enjoy all pleasures in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of that cow and her calf. Even after enjoying his merit in heaven he takes birth anywhere in the three worlds in a family consisting of the wealth of cows.[257]

Hanumanteswaratirtha

A gift of a cow at the Hanumanteśwara Tīrtha is considered the best, a cow gift being greater than any other gift.[258]

Prabhasatirtha

The gift of a cow here is meritorious and sin-cleansing.[259]

Kaloditirtha

A person offering a gift of a cow of the Kapilā species there is cleansed off his sins whether committed by thought, word or act. After performing ablution there the donor has to offer a cow of Kapilā variety in order to have the blessed abode of Viṣṇu after death and be the recipient of the praise of the celestial maidens (nymphs). He enjoys pleasures there for thousands of years emulating to the number of hairs on the body of the cow and calf gifted by him.[260] The gift of a cow of Kapilā species is praised in this context in glorious and illuminating terms. Even the gift of land or corn (paddy etc.), elephant, horse, gold is considered equal only to one-sixteenth part of the merit of the gift attached to Kapilā species.[261]

Narakeswaratirtha

One should offer a coy by name Vaitaraṇī after visiting the Narakeśwara (the lord of the Nether regions) Tīrtha according to the rituals.[262]

Jaleswaratirtha

In the Jaleśwaratīrtha on the banks of the river Devikā, the gift of a cow to a Brahmin well-versed in the Vedas is made.[263]

Vastrapatha Tirtha

In the sacred place of Vastrāpathatīrtha the gift of even a single milch cow along with cloths and bells and ornaments and a calf, vouchsafes salvation to the giver and perpetuates his generation.[264] Besides he is glorified in the abode of Brahma for a period numbering equal to the hairs on the body of the cow surrounded by Siddhas with the effulgence of Sun.[265]

Varahatirtha

Offer of a cow here ensures abode in Heaven for as many number of years as are equal to the number of hairs on the body of that cow.[266]

The Holy Place Raktanubandha

At the time of the solar or lunar eclipse a gift of a cow here is sure to rescue one for seven generations together.[267]

Gomati

One should offer a cow on the banks of the river Gomatī.[268]

Cow Gift on Some Other Occasions

In the Ārṣa form of marriage, the father of the bride makes a gift of a pair of cows to the groom and the groom accepts the same.[269]

A person making a gift of a cow of Kapilā species before an idol of God Viṣṇu redeems the souls of all his relatives.[270]

A person offering a cow of water while the Sun is at the constellation of Vṛṣa or a cow of sesame at the constellation of Mṛga never visits the dreadful hell.[271] During cāturmāsya a

person who imparts knowledge to his disciples or makes a gift of cow or land for the propitiation of Viṣṇu is sure to rescue his ancestors.[272]

A person who offers a cow of the black complexion for the propitiation of the planet Saturn is relieved of the tribulations caused by Ardhāṣṭamaśani.[273]

While the father of a person is alive if his mother predeceases, a cow besmeared with sandal paste should be given for redemption of sins and the donor is relieved of the debt of his father. He dwells in heaven for ever receiving the adoration of deities like Mādhava.[274]

The Gift of Number of Cows and the Merit Thereof

A person who offers a heifer i.e., a cow that has not yet calved, anxious to meet with a bull, will be glorified in Heaven. A person offering a pregnant cow (Gurviṇī) is sure to obtain the region of Vasus,[275] while the one giving a cow while giving birth to a calf is sure to obtain the merit attached to the gift of a land.[276] In another Purāṇa a cow with the head and hoof of a yet-unborn calf just coming out of the passage of the womb should be regarded as the very embodiment of the Goddess earth and the merit of making the gift of such a cow in that stage is identical with that of making the gift of the whole world.[277] And again according to another Purāṇa an offer of a cow with her calf not yet born completely (just at the stage when the calf is seen with its head and two legs emerging from mother's womb) according to the ritual obtains heaven for as many number of Yugas as there are hairs on the body of that cow.[278] According to Skānda Purāṇa by making a gift of such a cow to a Brahmin one obtains merit equal to the gift of the earth along with the mountains, gardens and forests.[279] But the Padmapurāṇa clearly states that such a gift of the cow of Kapilā species whose horns are plated with gold, hoofs of silver, body covered with costly cloth and decked with ornaments and her back-plated with copper along with a brass vessel to milk her[280] and the cow smeared with sandal paste and decorated with flowers is sure to make one redeem from all his sins and he becomes Acyuta in the world of Viṣṇu.[281]

A young milch cow that calves a calf every year is regarded as Samā Prasūtikā and is considered to be the embodiment of the earth. The giver of such a cow equals Indra, and rescues his hundred generations.[282]

The Gift of Ten Cows

Making a gift of ten cows is sure to confer on the donor the state whichever he wishes for.[283] If the ten cows of Kapilā species are gifted at the sacred place Jyeṣṭapuṣkara the donor acquires equal merit with that attached to the liberation of a bullock.[284] A person offering ten cows and a bullock obtains the general merit attached to the gift.[285] But a person offering a bullock and the ten cows obtains the merit attached to the gift of hundreds of thousand.[286] So it is evident that after making the gift of a bullock the gift of ten cows is more meritorious. The gift of ten cows should precede the gift of a bullock, to have the greater merit attached by such a gift.

The Gift of Hundred Cows

A righteous person after making a gift of hundred cows obtains the region of Sakra, the Lord of Gods for a period of Kalpa and he enjoys comforts with celestial nymphs.[287] In the Agnipurāṇa, it is stated that a person offering a gift of hundred cows is relieved from the nether regions.[288]

The Gift of Hundred Oxen

In a purāṇa the gift of hundred oxen is stated.[289] One offering one hundred oxen with herdsmen are redeemed from all their sins and certainly visits the capital of Indra, Amarāvatī. The giver resides there for a period of Kalpa and takes birth as men of affluence and care-free life.

The Gift of Thousand Cows

The gift of thousand cows is stated in the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa and Agnipurāna. In the former purāṇa it is stated that

a person who makes a gift of thousand cows is redeemed from all his sins.[290] In the latter it is said that a giver of thousand cows goes to the region of golden palaces, resides there along with Gandharvas and Apsaras in the palaces decked with the lines of Vasudhāra.[291]

The Gift of Thousand Oxen

In the Viṣṇu Dharmottarapurāṇa it is stated that those making a gift of thousand decked oxen along with herdsmen are sure to visit the region of cows (Goloka).[292]

Ritual of the Gift of Vaitarani[293]

A cow by name Vaitaraṇī of the complexion either of black or of pale-red should be given with her horns cased with gold, hoofs covered with silver along with a brass vessel to milk her, her back covered with a pair of garments along with seven kinds of paddy (corns). Yama should be made of gold and seated in a brass-vessel, on the crest of a cloud called Droṇa, made of cotton, with an iron staff forming a raft of sugar-canes fastened together with strong ropes having placed that cow born from the body of the Sun on the raft. The wise giver should provide the cow with an umbrella and sandals. Such a cow should be given along with a ring and clothes to a Brahmin. At the same time he has to recite this chant, holding reeds and water in his hand:

'Yamadvāre Mahāghore Sṛtvā vaitaraṇīm Nadīm
Tartu Kāmo Dadāmyenām tubhyām Vaitaranīmcagām
Viṣṇu Rūpa Dvija Sreṣṭa Bhūdeva Paṅktipāvana
Sadakṣiṇā Mayā tubhyam Dattā Vaitaranīca gauḥ
Gāvo Mamāgrato santu gāvo me santu pṛṣṭataḥ
Gāvo me hṛdhye santu gavām madhye Vasāmyaham'

35—30 to 32

After circumambulating the cow and Dharmarāja the giver offers the cow to the Brahmin and the Brahmin standing in front of the cow and the giver touching the tail of the cow has

to recite this chant:

'Dhenuke tvam pratīkṣasva yamadvāre Mahābhaye
Uttāraṇārtham Deveśi Vaitaraṇyai Namo Namaḥ'

34/2 and 35/1

He has to escort the Brahmin and hand over all the paraphernalia at his home. If he performs the gift in the said manner the river Vaitaraṇī confers happiness on him. Those offering thus a Vaitaraṇī cow obtain all their wishes for objects and happiness in this and the world to come.

The ritual of the gift of a cow of Vaitaraṇī in a similar way is described in Skāndapurāṇa also.[294] There the mantras are divided into three, the first Adhivāsanamantra (a mantra by which the consecration of Vaitaraṇī into the cow is made):

'Yamadvāre Mahāghore yāsā Vaitaraṇī Nadī
Tartu Kāmo Dadāmyenām tubhyam Vaitaraṇī Namaḥ'

159—80

The second Dana Mantra follows:

'Gāvo me cāgrataḥ santu gāvo me santu pṛṣṭhataḥ
Gāvo me hṛdaye santu gavām madhye Vasāmyahaṁ
Viṣṇu rūpa dvija sṛeṣṭha bhūdeva paṅktipāvana
Sadakṣinā Mayādattā tubhyam Vaitaraṇi Namaḥ'

81 and 82

The third Anuvrajanamantra Mantra intended to be recited while escorting the Brahmin who is in front of the cow, while the giver after holding the tail of the cow has to recite:

'Dhenuke tvam pratikṣasva yamadvāre Mahābhaye
uttitīrṣvraham Dheno Vaitaraṇyai namo astu te'

159—84

Thus the mantras according to the ritual are divided.

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3. *Ibid.*, 4-2-11.
3a. *Ibid.*, 1-126-3.
4. *Ibid.*, 5-30-12 to 15.
5. *Ibid.*, 5-36-6.
6. *Ibid.*, 5-42-8.
7. *Ibid.*, 5-61-5.
8. M.S., 10-10-7.
9. R̥.V., 6-45-31 and 32.
10. *Ibid.*, 6-47-24.
11. *Ibid.*, 7-18-22.
12. *Ibid.*, 8-1-33.
13. *Ibid.*, 8-6-47.
14. *Ibid.*, 10-133-7.
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16. A.V., 5-11.
17. *Ibid.*, 12-4-10.
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22. *Ibid.*, 12-4-15.
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25. *Ibid.*, 12-4-22.
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27a. M.S., 1-86 and 4-235.
b. V.R., 1-1-95.
c. Rāmayaṇa, 1-12-23.
d. 2-32-37 and 38.
e. Mahābhārata (Adi), 93-24.
28. *Ibid.* (Ādi), Chapter 99 verse 9.
29. *Ibid.* (Droṇa), Chapter 57 verses 7 and 8.
30. *Ibid.*, Chapter 58 verses 6 to 8.
31. *Ibid.*, Chapter 60 verses 3 and 4.
32. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verses 2, 4, 8 and 9.
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34. *Ibid.*, Chapter 68 verses 14 and 15.
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38. M.B. (Anu), Chapter 76 verses 25-27.
39. *Ibid.*, Chapter 77 verses 34-35.
40. *Ibid.*, Chapter 80 verse 17.
41. *Ibid.*, Chapter 81 verses 5, 6.
42. *Ibid*, Chapter 71 verse 53.
43. *Ibid.*, Chapter 76 verse 21.
44. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 48.
45. *Ibid.*, Chapter 71 verse 50.
46. *Ibid.*, Chapter 57 verses 28-29.
47. *Ibid.*, Chapter 57 verse 31.
48. *Ibid.*, Chapter 71 verse 52.
49. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 50.
50. B.V.P., 2-47-30.
51. Bhagavadgita
    Yajnādbhavati parjanyah
    Parjanyādannasambhavah (3-14).
52. B.V.P., 2-47-25.
53. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 66 verse 50.
54. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 46.
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56. *Ibid.*, Chapter 71 verse 54.
57. *Ibid.*, Chapter 71 verse 54.
58. *Ibid.*, Chapter 66 verse 47.
59. *Ibid.*, Chapter 76 verse 21.
60. *Ibid.*, Chapter 64 verse 14.
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64. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 59 verse 5.
65. *Ibid.*, 69-4.
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*, 69-5.
68. *Ibid.*, Chapter 79.
69. M.B. (Anu.), verses 11, 12, 13.
70. M.B. Aşvamedha Parva, Chapter 92, Vaishnavadharma Parva.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Ibid.*
73. M.B. Anuśasanika, Chapter 45 verse 20.
74. M.S., Chapter 3 verse 53.
75. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 57 verse 27.
76. *Ibid.*, Chapter 71 verse 50.
77. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 50.
78. M.B. (Anu.), 71-57.
79. *Ibid.*, (Anu.), Chapter 66 verse 54.
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91. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 78 verse 21 and Chapter 81 verse 38.
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102. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71-45.
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107. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 69 verses 20 and 21.
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111. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 66 verse 51.
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114. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 66 verse 53.
115. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 36 and Chapter 73 verse 41.
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117. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 77 verse 4
118. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 77 verses 5, 6 compare,
    Pītodakā jagdha tṛṇā dugdhadoha nirivdriyāḥ
    Anandā nāmatelokāstān sagacchati tā dadat
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119. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 77 verse 7.

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134. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 55.
135. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 65 verse 13.
136. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 93 verse 19.
137. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 130 verses 37 and 38.
138. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 130 verse 39.
139 *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 32.
140. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 73 verse 17.
141. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 73 verse 18.
142. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 73 verse 20.
143. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 76 verse 3.
144. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 76 verse 4.
145. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 76 verse 15.
146. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 76 verse 16.
147. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 38.
148. *Ibid.* (Anu.), Chapter 71 verse 46.
149. Padma Ādikhanda Chapter 42 verses 19 to 22.
150. Skānda—part 4, Chapter 27 verse 109.
151. Garuda Puraṇa, Chapter 98 verse 10.
152. Aghi Puraṇa, Chapter 211 verse 4.
153. Viṣṇu Dharmottara 3 Khanda, Chapter 306 verse 9.
154. Skānda-Nāgara, Chapter 15 verse 12.
155. Brahmavaivarta part 2, Chapter 27 verse 5, 6 and 7.
156. Varāha, Chapter 111 verses 1 and 2.
157. Skānda Nagara, Chapter 274 verse 12.
158. Garuḍapurana Uttar Khanda, Chapter 20.
159. Garuḍa part I, Chapter 98 verses 1 and 2.
160. Skānda part 2 again 8 sub-part, Chapter 6 verses 59, 62 and 63.
161. Garuḍa part I, Chapter 98.
162. Viṣṇu Dharmottara Khanda 3, Chapter 305 verses 5, 6.
163. V.D. Purana, *Ibid* 8.
164. G.P. Part I, Chapter 98 verse 10.

165. V.D.P. Part 3, Chapter 306 verse 9.
166. G.P. (Uttara), Chapter 4 verses 2, 3.
167. Garuḍa Uttar Khanda, Chapter 4 verses 3, 4.
168. *Ibid.* Uttar Khanda, Chapter 4 verse 6.
169. Skānda Part 3 sub-part I, Chapter 1 verses 94 and 95.
170. G.P., Chapter 105 verse 42.
171. G.P., Chapter 98 verse 19.
172. P. (Purana) Bhumi Khaṇḍa, Chapter 40 verse 70.
173. Garuḍa, Chapter 98 verse 4.
174. Garuḍa Uttara Khanda, Chaptar 4 verse 11.
175. Garuḍa Puraṇa Uttara, Chapter 4 verse 12.
176. G.P. Uttara, Chapter 35 verse 15.
177. *Ibid.*, Chapter 35 verse 38.
178. Skānda Nāgara, Chapters 26 and 226.
179. Viṣṇu Dharmottara Khanda 3, Chapter 306 verse 33.
180. Agni Puraṇa, Chapter 211 verses 8 and 9.
181. *Ibid.*, Chapter 211 verse 6.
182. *Ibid.*, Chapter 211 verse 28.
183. *Ibid.*, Chapter 210 verse 11, 12.
184. *Ibid.*, Chapter 210 verses 29, 30 and 31.
185. Padma Srshtikhanda, Chapter 45 verses 164 to 170.
186. Viṣṇu Dharmottara Part 3 Khanda, Chapter 306 verses 12-18 and 19.
187. *Ibid.*, see Mahābhārata (Anu.), for details, Chapter 77 verses 17 and 19 (page 136 of the Chapter 'Sanctity of Cow').
188. V.D.P. Part 3, Chapter 306 verse 41.
189. G.P. Uttara, Chapter 4 verse 10.
190. *Ibid.*, Chapter 4 verse 13.
191. *Ibid.*, Chapter 24 verse 78.
192. *Ibid.*, Chapter 26 verse 27.
193. *Ibid.*, Chapter 26 verse 28.
194. G.P. Uttara, Chapter 29 verse 14.
195. *Ibid.*, Chapter 29-15.
196. A.P., Chapter 210 verses 1 to 4.
197. M.P., Chapter 273 verses 11 and 12.
198. *Ibid.*, Chapter 275.
199. *Ibid.*, Chapter 277.
200. *Ibid.*, Chapter 278.
201. *Ibid.*, Chapter 280.
202. *Ibid.*, Chapter 282.
203. *Ibid.*, Chapter 285.
204. *Ibid.*, Chapter 287.
205. A.P., Chapter 210 verses 7 to 10.
206. V.D., Purāṇa 3, Chapter 306 verse 64.
207. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 65.
208. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 65.
209. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 66.

210. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 66.
211. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 67.
212. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 70.
213. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 73.
214. V.D.P. Khaṇḍa 3, Chapter 306 verses 73 and 74.
215. A. Purāṇa, Chapter 112 verse 8
216. S. Purāṇa p.3 Sub 1,Chapter 43 vease 87.
217. *Ibid.*, Chapter 43 verse 88.
218. *Ibid.*, Chapter 43 verse 89.
219. G.P., Chapter 105 verse 49.
220. Skānda 3-(2), Chapter 34 verse 35.
221. G.P. Uttara, Chapter 31 verse 9.
222. *Ibid.*, Chapter 105 verse 30.
223. G.P., Chapter 105 verse 32.
224. *Ibid.*, Chapter 105 verse 32.
225. *Ibid.*, Chapter 105 verse 33.
226. *Ibid.*, Chapter 105 verse 33.
227. G.P., Chapter 48 verse 90.
228. A.P., Chapter 66 verse 15.
229. *Ibid.*, Chapter 167 verse 1.
230. *Ibid.*, Chapter 167 verse 32.
231. A.P., Chapter 167 verse 32.
232. G.P., Chapter 101 verses 11 and 12.
233. *Ibid.*, Chapter 101 verse 12.
234. *Ibid.*, Chapter 132 verse 1.
235. *Ibid.*, Chapter 132 verse 2.
236. *Ibid.*, Cchapter 132 verse 2.
237. *Ibid.*, Chapter 132 verse 3.
238. A.P., Chapter 184 verses 2 and 8.
239. *Ibid.*, Chapter 184 verse 9.
240. P. Purana Sristhi, Chaper 20 verses 103 to 105.
241. *Ibid.*, Chapter 20 verse 116.
242. *Ibid.*, Chapter 22 verse 189.
243. *Ibid.* Chapter 24 verse 92.
244. *Ibid.*, Chapter 24 verse 267.
245. *Ibid.*, Chapter 31-147.
246. *Ibid.*, Chapter 31-148.
247. *Ibid.*, Chapter 31-149.
248. S.P. Part 2 (4), Chapter 2 verse 42.
249. *Ibid.*, Part 7, Chapter 343 verse 4.
250. *Ibid.*, Part 7, Chapter 343 verse 5.
251. *Ibid.*, Part 7(2), Chapter 16 verses 127 and 128.
252. G.P., Chapter 83 verse 27
253. *Ibid.*, Chapter 28.
254. *Ibid.*, Chapter 83 verses 56 and 57.
255. S.P. Part 2(1), Chapter 23 verses 2 and 23.

256. *Ibid.* Part 4, Chapter 27 verses 112 to 115.
257. *Ibid.* Part 5 (Reva), Chapter 142 verses 89 to 91.
258. *Ibid.* Part 5 (Reva), Chapter 83 verse 3.
259. *Ibid.* Part 5 (3), Chapter 98 verse 35.
260. *Ibid.* Part 5 (3), Chapter 119 verses 7 to 10.
261. *Ibid.* Part 5 (3), Chapter 119 verses 8 and 9.
262. *Ibid.* Part 5 (3), Chapter 159 verse 80.
263. *Ibid.* Part 7, Chapter 338 verse 76.
264. *Ibid.* Part 7 (2), Chapter 6 verses 99 to 103.
265. *Ibid.*, Chapter 6 verses 102 and 103.
266. *Ibid.* 7-3, Chapter 19 verses 10 and 11.
267. *Ibid.* 7-3, Chapter 31 verses 34 and 35.
268. *Ibid.* 7-4, Chapter 6 verses 22 and 23.
269. G.P., Chapter 95 verse 8.
270. A.P., Chapter 213 verse 8.
271. S.P., (6) Nāgara, Chapter 227 verse 12.
272. *Ibid.*, (6) Chapter 235 verse 20.
273. *Ibid.*, Chapter 174 verses 88 and 89.
274. P. Sṛṣṭhi, Chapter 45 verses 184 to 186.
275. V.D.P., Chapter 306 verse 10.
276. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 11.
277. G.P., Chapter 98 verse 9.
278. A.P., Chapter 210 verse 33.
279. Skānda Part 5, Chapter 51.
280. P.P. Sṛṣṭhi, Chapter 45 verses 172 and 173.
281. *Ibid.*, Chapter 45 verses 174 and 175.
282. *Ibid.*, Chapter 45 verses 186 to 188.
283. V.D.P., Chapter 306 verse 27.
284. A.P., Chapter 211 verses 8 and 9.
285. P.P. Sṛṣṭhi, Chapter 45 verses 177 to 178.
286. *Ibid.*, Chapter 45 verses 178 .
287. V.D.P. III, Chapter 306 verses 28 and 29.
288. A.P., Chapter 211 verse 3.
289. V.D.P. III, Chapter 306 verses 30 and 31.
290. *Ibid.*, Chapter 306 verse 29.
291. A.P., Chapter 211 verse 2.
292. V.D.P. Part 3, Chapter 306.
293. G.P. Uttarakhaṇḍa, Chapter 35.
294. S.P. Revākhaṇḍa, Chapter 159.

6

Goloka, The Region of Cows

The soul, the sky, time, the quarter, the region of cows as well as the herd of cows (Gokula) all these are permanent, lasting for ever.[1] The area from the nether part to the region of Brahman is called the Brahmāṇḍa. So, it is evident that Brahmāṇḍa is, situated in the middle of the Nether regions and the region of Brahman. Outside the Brahmāṇḍa and above the Brahmāṇḍa, there livs Vaikunṭha. And above the Vaikunṭha the region of Cows hails supreme.[2]

Nature and Scope of Goloka

In days of yore when a deluge took place, there remained a heap of light only. The glorious light is eternal and is the primeval cause of the entire universe. The light is the effulgence of the Omnipresent, Almighty. In that light there are three beautiful regions.[3] Of all the three regions the region of cows is the highest and it is in the form of a disc, eternal like the Almighty. It stretches over three crore yojanas bounded by precious and rare gems and even the yogins cannot dream of such a region with all the riches and piety. Only 'Vaiṣṇvās' staunch devotees, can aspire for and attain to such a region. This is upheld by Īśwara staying in the sky by his volition. It is devoid of agony, disease, old-age, death, grief and fear. It is beautified with innumerable palatial buildings adorned with

precious gems.[4]

Kṛṣṇa is the lord of the Goloka.[5] He pervades all over the region during deluge and when recreation starts the region becomes inhabited by Gopās and Gopīs. Beneath the region of the cows at the right side there is Vaikuṇṭha. The distance between Goloka and Vaikuṇṭha is one crore yojanas in extent. The Region of Śiva is situated to the left of it.[6]

The light illuminating the Goloka is glowing in all its resplendence feasting the eyes. The whole region is alluring with enchanting beauty proving itself as a perennial source of supreme bliss and happiness. Yogins endowed with an intellectual sight while performing penance, meditate and contemplate upon that supreme light[7] and in the panorama they visualise and describe that the Supreme Brahman has no definite form. But the supreme light pervading Goloka is identified with him. His complexion is like that of a fresh cloud. His eyes are beautiful akin to blossomed red lotuses. His charming face transcends the beauty of the autumnal moon. His form has the charm of one crore cupids and is the very receptacle of all romantic sports. In one of his hands there is a flute. The form casts a smile and is attired in silk. He is embedded with precious gems. He is very affectionate and benevolent to his devotees. His entire body is besmeared with sandal paste. His body is adorned with saffron and musk. His charming bosom shines with the Kaustubha gem. The crown worn by him glitters with precious gems. He wears a garland around his neck.[8]

The Greatness of the Lord of Goloka

The Vaiṣṇavas glorified him in the following way.[9] He is the supreme-Brahman, Eternal and Almighty. He is independent and second to none. He is the root cause of all beings, the sustainer of all. He appears always young and robed in the dress of a cowherd. He is so handsome that he cannot but be compared to the conglomeration of one crore full moons. He engages Himself in conferring favour on his devotees. He is above desires and has no form or change. He is one and all. He reigns supreme over all. He indulges in sports always, in the midst of Gopīs (cow-herdesses), in erotic sports. He is

regarded as the very embodiment of all auspiciousness. He grants all auspiciousness. He is the promoter of supreme bliss. He is truth. He is imperishable and everlasting and is not subjected to destruction. He is the Lord and Giver of all superhuman faculties, above nature and altogether different from it. He is devoid of all qualities, eternal and everlasting and the foremost. He is the supreme unmanifested. He is invoked and praised by many persons by hymns. He alone can perceive the vacant Universe which suffers destruction along with the quarters and the sky during deluge. It means he and he alone remains even after deluge in the Goloka.

The Greatness of Goloka

Surabhi, the foremost and first Goddess of cattle, the mother of the bovine species and the chief of cattle took birth in the Goloka.[10] She was born in the Bṛndāvana garden in ancient times. The story relating to her birth goes to relate that one day the spouse of Rādhā, along with Rādhā and all the cowherdesses went to the Bṛndāvana. He spent His time sporting with them happily. He was very much thirsty after a while and wished to drink milk. He created Surabhi from his left part. She was milk-yielding and had a calf.[11] Having seen her and her calf Sudāma brought her milk in a pitcher studded with gems. Kṛṣṇa had drunk the milk which excelled even the very nectar in its flavour and granted immortality—freed from the chain of birth and death. Her milk formed a long lake of milk spread to a width of hundred yojanas. It is made by Rādhā and other Gopikas as their sportwell.[12] From the hair-pits of Surabhi there arose innumerable desire-yielding cows. The entire world was then spread by cows and bulls by the mere will of Surabhi.[13] Lord Kṛṣṇa worshipped Surabhi.[14] Therefore, the worship of cows became a pious thing. It cannot be performed by unfortunate persons. The worship of cows was enjoined by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the mortals also.[15]

Elsewhere in the same Purāṇa[16] it is stated that many herds of cows and bullocks along with their calves immediately sprang from the hair-pits of the body of Kṛṣṇa. They were of permanent youth, manifold and suspicious. They were very beautiful

and attractive and wish-yielding. In the Goloka Lord Kṛṣṇa offered a bull to Śiva. That bull was equal in strength to millions of lions. Śiva accepted the offer and made the bull his mount.

Origin of the Goloka

There is another account in the Mahābhārata relating to the origin of the Goloka,[17] which differs from that of Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa. Once in the Deva Yuga, the illustrious Surabhi, the daughter of Dakṣa practised severe penance on the peaks of the Kailāsa mountain for a period of eleven thousand years. Brahman, gratified with her severe penance, granted her a boon. But she did not ask him anyting being selfless by nature. Then Brahman, who was exceedingly gratified with her dispassionate nature, himself conferred on her immortality and residence in a region that is higher than the three worlds. That region by the grace of Brahman became the famous Goloka. The Lord of Goloka is Pūṣan.[18]

The trees in the Goloka produce sweet fruits. Those trees abound in excellent flowers and fruits. Excellent fragrance emanates from these flowers and the atmosphere is pervaded with sweet aroma. The entire soil of that region is made of gems. The sand particles are of gold. There are present all seasons with their excellencies assured always. There is no dust. It is very auspicious. The streams that flow in those regions shine best in all their resplendence and grandeur, with the red lotuses that blossom on their bosoms. They are also beautified with the jewels and gems and gold on their banks. The jewels and gems and gold on the banks of the streams display the effulgence of the morning sun. There are many lakes also, having lotuses on their bosoms, consisting of blue lotuses here and there, whose petals are made of precious gems and the filaments shine with the complexion of gold.[19]

The regions are also adorned with flowering forests of the Karavīra, with thousands of beautiful creepers. The forests are also surrounded by the Santānakas bearing their flowery burdens. There are rivers whose banks are variegated with many bright pearls and resplendent gems and bright gold. In those regions there are excellent trees that are beautified with jewels

and precious stones of every description and variety. Some of them are made of gold. There are many hills of jewels and gems. They shine in all their splendour with their high summits that are composed of all kinds of gems. The trees always put forth flowers and fruits and are always adorned with foliage.

The flowers always emit a celestial fragrance and the fruits are exceedingly sweet. Those persons of meritorious deeds always sport there in hilarity. Those who reside there are freed from grief and wrath, they live there with the fruition of every wish. They sport there happily moving about from one place to another on delightful and fanciful conveyances. Auspicious bands of celestial nymphs (Apsarass) always entertain them with music and dance.[20]

In another context it is also illustrated[21] that the regions are connected with the accomplishment of all desires. Death, old age or fire have no access into those regions. Ill-fate or misfortune can never be there. Many delightful forests and beautiful palaces are there. Vehicles are well-equipped to move about according to one's wish.

In the Goloka time is paralysed, without the trace of fatigue. The cows reside there, obtain the fruition of every wish which they cherish in their hearts. They can visit any place and every place and enjoy all they wished for one after another. All kinds of delightful objects, lakes, tanks, rivers, forests, mansions and hills which cause exhilaration to all creatures are seen in the Goloka. There is no other region nearer than or equal in degree to the superior felicity attached to Goloka.[22]

The abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa is described by himself in the Bhagavadgīta :[23]

Na tad bhāsayate sūryo Na sasaṁko nà pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante taddhāma paramam mama

Chapter 15 verse 6

Which means 'that abode of mine is not illumined by the Sun or Moon or by any kind of light produced by fire and anybody who reaches it should never return to this material world.'

According to some this verse undoubtedly describes the eternal abode of Kṛṣṇa viz. Goloka. As previously stated in

the Goloka only there is no existence of fire. It is not illuminated by Sun or Moon also. It is always illuminated by Brahmajyoti, the Eternal Light. The Eternal Torch illuminating the Goloka is glowing in all its resplendence. The supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the embodied form of this Eternal Light. Though the Lord resides eternally in his abode pervading the entire Goloka, yet he can descend to the mortal world as Śyāmasundara.

In the effulgent rays of the spiritual sky there are innumerable planets floating. The Brahmajyoti emanated from the supreme abode, Kṛṣṇaloka and the Ānandachinmaya planets, which are not material, float in those rays. It is previously stated that this spiritual sky in which the Goloka is situated is upheld by Īśwara. One who can obtain that spiritual sky is not required to return again to the material sky. In the material sky, Brahmaloka who reaches the Brahmaloka he has to return one day or the other to the lower abodes. Therefore Lord says :[24]

Ā brahma bhuvanāllokāḥ punarāvarti no arjuna
māmupetyatu kaunteya punarjanma na vidyate

8-16

The supreme abode, Kṛṣṇaloka is described in two more verses of the Gīta. The first verse is :

Avyaktoakṣara ityuktastamāhuḥ paramām gatiṁ
yaṁ prāpyana nivartante taddhāma paramam mama

8-21

'The supreme abode is called the unmanifested and the infallible. It is the supreme destination. When one goes there, one never comes back. That is my supreme abode.' The second verse is as follows :

Puruṣaḥ saparaḥ pārtha Bhaktyālabhyastvananyayā
yasyāntasthāni bhūtāni yenasarvamidam tatam

8-22

'The supreme personality of God-head who is greater than all, is attainable by the greatest devotion. Although He is

present in his abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him.'

The above fact is substantiated in the Brahma Saṁhitā and his abode is described as Cintāmaṇidhāma, a place where all desires are fulfilled. The supreme abode of Kṛṣṇa is known as Goloka Bṛndāvana. It is beautified with the palaces made of touch-stone. It is abound with 'desire-yielding-trees' and Surabhi Cows.[25] In this abode, Lord Kṛṣṇa is served by innumerable Goddesses of Fortune. He is styled as Govinda. He used to blow his flute. His supernal appearance is the most enchanting of all the denizens. The same abode is the greatest planet in the spiritual kingdom and it is the ultimate destination.[26] When one reaches, one does not return to the material abode. The supreme personality of Lord and the Supreme Abode are inseparable. They are the very embodiment of Supreme Bliss. The Brahma Saṁhitā further describes the Supreme Abode as 'Ānnanda Cinmayarasa' which means a place where everything is full of spiritual bliss. There is nothing material, and everything is situated with the characteristic of spiritual bliss. As explained in the Seventh Chapter, it is all due to the spiritual energy emanated from Kṛṣṇa.[27] Although Kṛṣṇa is always in his supreme abode, he is all-pervading by His material energy. Thus, by His material as well spiritual energies, He is present everywhere—both in the material worlds and spiritual worlds.

'Yasyāntasthāni' means that everything (material and spiritual) is sustained by Him. While residing in Goloka, His Supreme Abode, He perfectly conducts all affairs with diligent care by the quality of His all-pervasiveness.[28]

Lord Kṛṣṇa exhorts His devotees, not to aspire for the material worlds, because even if they reach Brahmaloka the highest of the material worlds, there they have to suffer the inconveniences of birth disease, old age and death. But one who aspires and reaches the Supreme planet Kṛṣṇa Loka i.e., Goloka Bṛndavana or at least any other planet in the spiritual abode, he does not suffer those inconveniences i.e., he gets immortality. Of all the planets present in the spiritual sky, Goloka Bṛndāvana is the greatest planet and the original planet identified with the original personality of Kṛṣṇa.[29]

Bṛndāvana which is in the district of Mathura, ninety miles south-east from Delhi, is a replica of Goloka Bṛndavana, when Kṛṣṇa descended on this Earth, He sported in that holy land known as Bṛndāvana.[30] When Lord Kṛṣṇa resided in the Bṛndāvana His activities with his cow-herd boys and maids and other inhabitants of Bṛndāvana and cows, all were full of perennial bliss. All people resided there knew nothing but Him.[31]

Thus, as Goloka is the supreme planet of all other planets, instead of aspiring for attaining other regions, and worldly things, which are not capable of being equal to the supreme Goloka, one must always aspire Goloka to have permanent spiritual bliss.

In a purāṇa[32] a story is described relating to why Kṛṣṇa had to descend on this earth along with Rādhā. The story is as follows : Once Lord Kṛṣṇa sported along with a fortunate Gopi by name Virajā, on the mountain śatasṛṅga which was in the Garden, Goloka Bṛndāvana. They did not complete their romance as they were very much acquainted with dalliance and they were having mutual intimacy and affection. They enjoyed blissful union for a period of lakhs of years. It was but a jiffy to Lord Kṛṣṇa who was in the Goloka and who was eternal.

The servant-maids of Rādhā reported the same to the latter. Rādhā in a fit of rage cast off all ornaments from her body. Sudāma one of the cowherds and devotees of Kṛṣṇa informed Kṛṣṇa that Rādhā after knowing the love affairs started along with innumerable maids. Then Kṛṣṇa fled away from there. His spouse Virajā and her friends also were very much afraid. In the Goloka Virajā changed into a river and sorrounded the region as a moat. Her friends also became small rivers. Rādhā could not find Virajā and Kṛṣṇa and returned to her abode. After some time Kṛṣṇa went there to pacify her anger. After seeing him Rādhā threatened Him. Then Sudāma in return threatened her even in the presence of Kṛṣṇa. Then Rādhā in rage cursed him to become a demon. Sudāma in return cursed her also to take birth in Bhārata country and suffer the separation from Kṛṣṇa for a period of hundred years and Lord Kṛṣṇa would relieve the burden of the mortal world (by suppressing evil spirits).

In consequence of their curses, Sudāma became a demon by

name Śaṅkhacūḍa, the husband of Tulaśī. Rādhā descended to the Gokula as the daughter of a Vaiśya by name Vṛṣabhānu and his wife Kalāvatī.[33] Kṛṣṇa also descended in the Gokula to relieve the burden of the mother earth as the dearest son of Nanda and Yaśodā. Rāyaṇa the brother of Yaśoda, performed the marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā in the holy garden by name Bṛndāvana. For some time Kṛṣṇa the lord of Goloka spent his time in the Bhārata country along with Rādhā.[34] After some time as a result of the curse of Sudāma they were separated. At the end of hundred years, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇā were reunited. They both went to the Goloka.[35]

CERTAIN EVENTS IN GOLOKA

Krsna's Sports

Lord Kṛṣṇa used to spend his time in a lonely forest along with Rādhā and other cowherdesses engaged in dance. Sometimes He used to tend the herd of wish-yielding cows along with the cowherd boys in the Garden named Bṛndāvana. Sometimes he used to blow his flute by name Veṇu on the banks of Virajā in the Pārijāta garden in the region of cows. These were the general interesting avocations of the Lord of Goloka.[36]

Indra's Worship of Surabhi

Once upon a time a deluge was created by Viṣṇu.[37] As a result, milk became a rare commodity in all the three worlds. Thereupon, all the deities lamented. Having visited the region of Brahma they extolled him. He commanded Indra to worship Surabhi. Then Indra paid his homage chanting the following hymn :

Namo devyai mahādevyai surabhyai ca namonamaḥ
Gavām bījaswarūpāyai namaste jagadambike
Namo Rādhāpriyāyaica padmāṁśāyai namo namaḥ
Namaḥ Kṛṣṇa priyāyai ca gavām mātre namonamaḥ
Kalpa Vṛkṣa swarūpāyai sarveṣām santataṁ param
Śrīdāyai dhanadāyai ca Vṛddhidāyai namo namaḥ

Śubhadāyai Prasannāi gopradāyai namo namaḥ
Yaśodāyai kīrtidāyai dharmajñāyai namo namaḥ

2-47-24 to 27

After hearing the hymn in her praise, Surabhi immediately was gratified and fulfilled his desire and returned to Goloka. The entire universe had plenty of milk. The deities felt much contentment.

Siva's Visit to Goloka

Once cursed by some Brahmins Śiva visited Goloka and with controlled sense he praised Surabhi in the following way.[38] Obeisance to you O ! mother as you are the cause of the entire Creation, Preservation and Destruction. You are nourishing the (denizens of) earth, heaven and hades with nectareous sentiments. You are yielding very delicious and tasteful commodities. You only render this universe that, consisting of might and friendship. You are the sister of Ādityas. If you are pleased you can fulfil all desires. You are Dhṛti svāhā and Svadhā; affluence, accomplishment, fortune (riches), fame and the intellect, you are charm, modest, great illusion, reverence, all wish-yielder. There is nothing in these three worlds devoid of you i.e., everything is pervaded by you and you only. You can satisfy the fire and deities. You have pervaded the entire world, mobile and immobile. Your feet are the four Vedas. Your udders form the oceans. Your eyes are the Moon and the Sun. On your hairtips the deities reside. On your horns all the mountains exist. The winds reside in your ear-parts. The nectar is in your navel. Your hooves are the nether regions. On your back Lord Brahma stays and on your mount Lord Śiva resides. In your heart Vīṣṇu stays. At the tip of your tail snakes stay. The Vasus reside in your dung. The sādhyas are in your urine. In your bones all sacrifices are embodied. In your reproductory organ the kinnaras stay. In front of you, there reside all the paternal deities. On your forehead the yakṣas and on your temples (Kapola) the kinneras stay. You are the concourse of all deities and the perpetuator of all beings. You always strive for the well-being of all regions and hence restore my body

also. I adore you who are very pious. I extol that you can counteract all the agonies of the universe, pray, kindly grant me a boon. My body is defiled by the curse of Brahmins, you are capable of making up my body with your vigour. Thus having praised Surabhi Śiva entered her body and disappeared. Then Surabhi bore him in her womb.

THE RECIPIENTS OF GOLOKA

The Devotees of Krsna

The knowledge that Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all is the greatest.[39] It is stated that Kṛṣṇa is the quintessence of all Vedas, austerities, pilgrimages, penances, (worship of) deities, and merits. The holy places become holier by the touch of the wind that touched by the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. A person who adores the chant of Kṛṣṇa is regarded as one who has obtained salvation with his mortal frame (i.e. Jīvanmukta). Any man who takes up His name is sure to become Nārāyaṇa. The same person without performing any japa or tapas or pilgrimage or worship is enabled to rescue thousands of his ancestors. After rescuing them he goes to the Goloka.

The Performers of Go-Vrata

A person who prforms Go-vrata for a period of one month, after being redeemed from all his sins, verily goes to the Goloka. For a period of one month he has to bathe in the urine of cows, and subsist on milk. When the cows stand he should stand, when they sit he should not sit. If they do not take fodder he should observe fast. If they do not drink water he should not drink water. When they are not having any shelter he should not seek after shelter for himself. When they are afflicted with fear he should protect them even at the cost of his life. This is known as Go-vrata.[40]

Somewhere else also Go-vrata is described in the following way.[41] A man should wash his body with cow-urine, subsist on the preparations of her milk, tend a herd of cows, lead them to fresh pastures daily, and take his meal after the cows have

been fed. A man by leading such a life continuously for a month is regarded as redeemed from all sins and goes to heaven and ultimately he will have access to the highest region Goloka.

The Reciters of Gomati-Mantra

A person while reciting morning and evening the Gomatī mantra whichever he desires in his mind succeeds in attaining the accomplishment of those desires for a period of fourteen Indra ages. Undoubtedly he goes to Goloka also. In another Purāṇa[42] also it is stated that a person who constantly recites the Gomatīvidyā (mantra) is sure to visit Goloka after his death.

The Worshippers of Parents go to Goloka

In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa[43] Śrī Rāma says to Sīta that those high souls who worship their parents with reverence would obtain great regions such as, the region of deities, Gandharvas, cows (Goloka).

Some More Meritorious Persons who go to Goloka

Those meritorious persons who are forgiving and forbearing and affectionate to all beings, who have obedience and reverence to their preceptors, and who are free from egoistic nature, are sure to go to Goloka.[44]

He who abstains from every kind of flesh, who is endowed with righteousness (dharma) who adores his parents with great reverence, who is bound to truthfulness, who serves Brahmins, who is pure in his conduct; who is never stained with anger towards cows and Brahmins, who always performs righteous duties, who serves his preceptors with reverence, who devotes his whole life to truth and gifts; who is forgiving and forbearing towards the sin of a sinful person, who is endowed with serene nature, who is having self-control, who is a devotee of deities, who receives all guests with hospitality, who is sympathetic, verily, he who is endowed with these qualities succeeds in

visiting the eternal and imperishable Goloka.[45]

No Access to Sinful Persons

The following sinful persons have no access to the Goloka,[46] viz. one who is stained with adultery cannot see the Goloka, nor one who is a slayer of one's preceptor, nor one who tells lies or indulges in chit-chat, nor he who always disputes with others, nor he who behaves with little hospitality towards the Brahmins. Indeed such sinful persons fail to attain even a sight of these glorious regions. It is the same case with following persons also, viz. one who betrays the confidence of one's friends, one who behaves deceitfully, one who is ungrateful, one who is wicked, one who is crooked and disregards Dharma, one who is a slayer of a Brahmin. Such persons also cannot see Goloka even in their imagination.

The Givers of Cows

Those good persons who are freed from jealousy and who make gifts of cows are considered righteous people and givers of all articles. They would go to the region of cows.[47] Somewhere else it is ascertained that a person goes to Goloka as the reward of his making a gift of cows.[48]

Some More Persons go to Goloka along with the Givers of Cows

A person who has thousand cows and gives away one hundred cows every year, or who has hundred cows and gives away ten cows or who has ten cows or five cows and gives away one cow from them and who are practisers of Brahmacarya throughout their lives, and who obey the declarations of the Vedas, and who are endowed with senses withdrawn from every other object, resort to pilgrimages, these are sure to reside in the region of cows.[49]

Recalling Krsna at the time of Death

Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed a great secret of approaching that abode

of the supreme Lord viz., Goloka. He says—

> *Aṁtakālepi māmeva smaranmuktwā kalevaram*
> *yaḥ prayāti samabhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatrasaṁśayaḥ*
>
> (8-5)

meaning thereby that a person who departs from the body thinking of me alone, even at the time of his death attains my state and there is no doubt about it.[50]

Visnumantra

Whoever is preached Viṣṇumantra from his preceptor, his entire action (Karma) of both good and evil is cut by the wheel of Kṛṣṇa. Due to the fear of the wheel both old age and death also go away. The devotee goes to the region of cows without fear after his death. There he takes a divine body and lives there as long as Kṛṣna will be there. He serves Kṛṣṇa, considering the life duration of Brahma to be perishable.[51]

Gopicandana

A person who besmears his body with gopīcandana even though he is a grave sinner, Yama or his attendants cannot take him to hell. Moreover he who daily wears Gopicandana goes to the region of cows, the permanent abode of Kṛṣṇa.[52]

Radha's Worship

He who performs the worship of Rādhā according to the injunction, equals Viṣṇu and goes to Goloka.[53]

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3. *Ibid.*, 1-2-4 and 5.
4. *Ibid.*, 1-2-6 to 9.
5. *Ibid.*, 1-8-21.
6. *Ibid.*, 1-2-10.
7. *Ibid.*, 1-2-14.
8. *Ibid.*, 1-2-15 to 21.
9. *Ibid.*, 1-2-21 to 27.
10. *Ibid.*, 2-47-2.
11. *Ibid.*, 2-47-6.
12. *Ibid.*, 2-47-10.
13. *Ibid.*, 2-47-11.
14. *Ibid.*, 2-47-12 and 13.
15. *Ibid.*, 2-47-12 and 14.
16. *Ibid.*, 1-5-44 to 46.
17. M.B. (Anu.), 83-25 to 37.
18. *Ibid.*, 81-31.
19. *Ibid.*, 81-19 to 22.
20. *Ibid.*, 81-23 to 30.
21. *Ibid.*, Chapter 83 verses 40 to 43.
22. *Ibid.*, Chapter 73 verses 5 to 9.
23. See also Bhagavadgīta as it is by Bhakti Vedanta Swamy Prabhupada Introduction p. 19.
24. Bhagavadgīta, Chapter 8 verse 16.
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27. *Ibid.*, p. 432.
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32. B.V.P. Part 2, Chapter 49.
33. *Ibid.*, 2-47-36.
34. *Ibid.*, 2-47-46.
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36. *Ibid.*, 1-18-23 to 26.
37. *Ibid.*, 2-47-22.
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39. B.V.P., 2-65 33 to 37.
40. V.D.P., 42-38 to 40.
41. A.P., 292-12, 13.
42. V.D.P. Khanda 2, Chapter 42 verse 44 and Agni 292-14.
43. V.R., 2-30-37

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45. *Ibid.*, Chapter 73-11 to 13.
46. *Ibid.*, Chapter 73-14 and 15.
47. *Ibid.*, Chapter 81-17 and 18.
48. *Ibid.*, Chapter 81-30.
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50. Bhagavadgīta as it is introduction, p. 22.
51. B.V.P. (1) Chapter 14 verses 59 and 60, 63-66.
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8

Sanctity of the Cow

As cows belong to Indra and Indra is the Lord of Cattle-wealth.[1] Vamadeva glorifies Uṣas and states that Uṣas is the mother of cows.[2] The cleansed (filtered) juice of Soma mixed with curd is called Dadhyāsir. It is referred to in a verse as a very delicious beverage of Indra.[3] Somewhere else, the white Soma juice mixed with milk is referred to as the drink meant for Indra and other deities like Maruts, Rudras etc.[4] Indra is invoked and compared to a cow that has not yet milked.[5] Vaṣiṣṭha says that Uṣas nourishes the cows and the lowing of cows are indeed prayers to Uṣas. Here the lowing of cows are identified with the prayers to Uṣas.[6] Citrarāja donated innumerable cows to Sobhari.[7] Soma is the bestower of cows.[8]

In a verse, appeal is made not to gamble away the time but to take up agriculture for getting satiety. One must subsist on cultivation as the cattle are useful for the said purpose.[9] Indra states that his devotees cooked thirty-five oxen for his sake. He became fatty by subsisting on them.[10] Bulls, cows, horses, sheep, etc., were sacrificed for the propitiation of deities.[11] Dakṣiṇa (sacrificial fee in the form of cows) confers cows on the sacrificer.[12] Heaven is vouchsafed unto the donors.[13]

Sage Śabara glorifies cows in a hymn. He states that cows are offered to Gods. Their forms are known to Soma. Cows after being impregnated yield milk in plenty.[14]

Pūrurava states that while he is in separation with his beloved, he cannot rob the cows of his enemies.[15] While Ūrvaśi, his lady love, states that in the separation period of her lover she could subsist by taking a little quantity of clarified butter.[16]

In a riddle in Yajurveda, in answer to what is equal to the illumination of Surya, what lake is equal to the sea, what is more spacious than the Earth, and what thing is that which naught can mete, it is said that Brahma is the lustre like the Sun, Heaven is the flood to match the Sea, Indra is vaster than the Earth and above all the Cow is beyond all measure the greatest, as the Cow is supplying the elements of sacrifice, and sacrifice is the root cause of all the things that are created.[17]

Whereas in Ṛgveda the cow-slaughter is decried,[18] without mentioning the punishment therefore; in Adharvaveda, it is stated since the cow is considered to be a member of the family itself, if the demons destroy a cow, the whole family as a whole will slay them with the pieces of lead.[19]

In a hymn, the fondling of a calf by her mother is described as follows :

> 'Let the Cow's heart and soul firmly set on her calf, just as an enamoured man's desire is firmly set on his dame.'

Cow's love towards her calf (Vatsa) is a fitting illustrious example of strong natural affection. The word 'Vatsa' stands for 'Darling' generally. 'Vātsalya'—the natural affection—displayed by a cow towards her young calf is also used in the sense of any natural affection of parents towards their offspring.[20]

Vistari Sacrifice is compared to the cow which grants all wishes. It means the mythical cow of plenty and fulfiller of all desires.[21]

The Sacred Hymn Glorifies Clarified Butter (Ghrta)[22]

Ghṛta, the clarified butter is the most important material for the performance of sacrifice; in the Vedic chants it is styled as the tongue of the Gods (Jihvā Devānam). That is the navel of ambrosia (Amṛtasya Nābhiḥ). It confers immortality for him who offers

it as oblations. The sacrifice has four horns (Priets according to Mahīdhara) in which Ghṛta is offered. According to Sāyaṇa the horns are the four Vedas (Chant by reciting which Ghṛta is offered). The stanza according to Sāyaṇa refers to Agni as the Sun. Mahīdhara ascribes it to Ghṛta. Sāyaṇa, in confirmity with the opinion of Yāska and others applies this verse to Agni identified either with Yajña or with Āditya. The four horns of the Yajña are the four Vedas of the latter the four cardinal points of the Horizon, the three feet of the Yajña are the three daily sacrifices belonging to Āditya (Sun), day, noon and evening. The two heads of Yajña are two particular ceremonies termed Brahmaudanam and Pravargya on the part of Āditya they are of day and night. The seven hands of Yajña are the seven metres; of Āditya the seven rays, or the six seasons and their aggregate, or the year, as the seventh. The three forms or states in which the Ghee was deposited in the cow were milk, Curds, and butter of which Indra generated milk, Surya butter and the Gods, tatakṣuḥ, Curds from the shining, Venat, that is Agni; or Vāyu restored the power of the elements of sacrifice respectively in heaven, the firmament, and the earth; after they had been rendered ineffectual for a time by the malignant Paṇis. The verses from five to ten describe the streams of Ghee that flow and descend upon the fire. The streams of Ghee are compared to the golden Vetasa, deer flying from the hunter, high spirited steed, devoted wives auspicious and smiling to a husband, they feed the Jātavedas, propitiated. The streams are also compared to maidens decorating themselves with unguents to meet the bridegroom.

In the tenth verse cows are invoked to bless the sacrificers who offer Ghee oblations with herd of cattle that produce Ghee. The Cows are invoked in the last verse also to provide the devotees with sweet flavoured wave (clarified butter) which is well established in them.

The Typical Sacrificial Bull is Glorified in a Hymn[23]

The Bull, the Bṛhaspati's steer, is vigorous with all forms of Nature within his flanks. He has been an instrument in blessing the worshippers through sacrifice. He is the husband of the

cows; the father of young calves and the giver of plenty and prosperity. He is blessed to reach the path ways of Gods by Agni Jātavedas to Indra. He is the God's allotted share, the essence of waters, plants and butter, besides the draught of Soma.

In the form of Indra, the bull is invoked to bless them. With Varuṇa's arms, Indra's vigour, Maruts' hum, the Aśvins' shoulders, the bull is called by wise sages as Bṛhaspati. The Gods call him Indra, and Sarasvan (bestower of fertility). Bṛhaspati and Savitṛ give him vitality. Tvaṣṭṛ and Vāyu give him breath, Earth and Heaven serve as Sacrificial grass when the Bull offered in sacrifice is in air's mid-region. The ideal archetypal bull's portions assigned to the gods are set down; Anumatī claims his sides, Bhaga his rib-pieces, Mitra, the knee-bones, Ādityas the hinder parts, Bṛhaspati the loins, Vāta the tail to stir the plants and herbs with it, Sūrya the skin, Śinīvali the inward parts, the Slaughterer the feet.

With his horns, the bull strikes at the demons; with his eyes, it banishes famines and with his ears, it hears good things. For many a time he becomes the sacrificial bull, he gets immunity from Fire, by offering the bull in sacrifice, the Brahmin is blessed by all Gods.

By offering the bull, to Brahmins the donor shall be blessed with assured growth and increase in his herd, bodily strength and progeny. The bull serves amply the need to impregnate the cows and increases the cow-wealth.

The Glorification of Bull[24]

The two horns of the bull are Prajāpati and Parameṣṭin. His Head is Indra and forehead is Agni. The joint of neck is Yama. His brain is the king Soma. Upper jaw is the sky and Earth is his lower jaw. His tongue is the lightning. The teeth are the Maruts. His neck is the Revati. His shoulders are the Kṛttikas. The Gharma is the shoulder bar. Vāyu is his Universe. Svarga is his world. The Śyena cermony is the breast. Air is the region of his belly. Bṛhaspati is the hump. Bṛhati the breast bone. The ribs are the consorts of the gods. Mitra and Varuṇa are the shoulder blades. The fore arms are Tvaṣṭṛ

and Āryaman. Indrāṇi is his hinderparts. His tail is Vāyu. Pavamāna is his hair. The hips are priest hood and princely sway. His two knee bones are Dhātar and Savitar. His legs are Gandharvas. Aditi is his hoofs. Thought is his heart. Intelligence is his liver. His pericardium is law. The belly is hunger. His rectum is refreshing drink. His inward parts are mountains. Wrath is his kidneys. Anger is his teats. Generative Organ is his offspring.

Sitting he is Agni while standing he is the very Aśvins. Standing eastwards he is Indra, southwards he is Yama. He is Dhātar while standing westwards and he is Savitar while standing northwards. When he has taken grass he is King Soma. When he looks about him he is Mitra. When he has turned round he is joy. While he is yoked he belongs to all gods. When yoked he is Prajāpati and when unyoked he is all. Thus verily this bovine form is omniform.

In this hymn[24a] the cow also is the subject of glorification. Her womb is the river. Her breasts are the lords of the rain. Her udder is the thunder. The all embracing Aditi is her hide. Her hair is the all herbs. Her form is the all lunar mansions. Her entrails are the hosts of Gods. Her bowels are men, demons are her abdomen. Her blood is Rākṣsās. Other folk are contents of the stomach. Her fat is the rain cloud. Her Marrow is her resting place.

Sataudana[25]

In the Atharva Veda, there is a hymn glorifying Śataudana, the Sacrificial Cow accompanied with a hundred Odanas, messes of boiled rice or any other grain mashed and cooked with milk. Lord Indra is the first to offer this oblation.

Here the priest binds the mouth of the cow (victim) before immolation. He identifies her limbs with the sacrificial paraphernalia such as altar, sacred grass and holy water. Her skin is described as the altar; her hair the sacred grass as well the holy water. She goes to heaven straightaway after being deified.

One who prepares the hundred-fold oblation placing a cake of flour in its centre (apūyanābhim) ascends to Heaven. One

who offers the hundred-fold oblation and pays gold to priests as sacrificial fee (Dakṣiṇa) is sure to win all the worlds belonging to Heaven and the Earth. Thus, it will be seen both the sacrificer as well the sacrifice itself are extolled. The victim is considered as 'Devi' (Goddess)—an embodiment of divinity.

Glorification of Cow[26]

The man who knows the seven celestial rivers and the seven distances and the head of sacrifices has to receive the holy cow. The cow pours a thousand streams and preserves the Heaven, the earth and these waters. Her foot is sacrifice, her milk is libation, Svadhā her breath. Agni and Soma have entered the cow. Parjanya (protector of the cow) is her udder, lightnings are her teats. The cow pours out food in the form of milk. The Lord of Riches took the milk from the Cow in his wrath and it is preserved in three reservoirs in the vault of heaven. Kṣatriya's mother is the cow, Svadhā is the cow. Sacrifice is the weapon of the cow. From Brahma's summit a drop went forth and mounted up and produced the cow. The Gāthās came from the mouth, strength sprang from the neck's nape, sacrifice from the flanks, rays of sunlight from the teats of the cow. From her forequarters and thighs motion was generated; from her entrails food was produced and from her belly came the plants. When the cow passed into the belly of Varuṇa and came out, the Brahman cried that he is a cow and has become alike a cow by the spells. Sacrifices have become victories and the cow their eye. The cow has welcomed sacrifice and the cow has held the Sun in place. The mess of rice together with the prayer passed into the cow. When a man having this knowledge receives the cow, the offer by the giver is considered meritorious. Within the mouth of Varuṇa there are three glittering tongues, the shining midmost of them is this Cow, most difficult to hold. The cow showers water, life eternal, sacrifice and cattle are the four things. The cow is Heaven, the cow is earth, the cow is Viṣṇu, Lord of Life. The Sādhāas and the Vasūs have drunk the outpouring of the Cow and adored her milk in the home of the Sun. For the sake of Soma some have milked her, some worshipped the fatness

she has poured. Those who have given a cow to the right person who has this knowledge have reached the third region of the sky. One who gives a cow to a Brahmin wins all the worlds. Both Gods and mortal men depend for life and existence on the Cow. The cow has become the whole universe all pervading.

Sanctity of the Cow Vasa[27]

The cow belongs to the Brahmin priests as she came into being in the days of yore and spring to life for the sake of Gods and Brahmins. Offering a cow therefore to the priests is indeed guarding private property. The gift will bring forth sons and progeny to the donors. When Brahmins beg for the cow, one should offer her, otherwise the cow deprives of progeny and makes him poor.

One should never even think that cows are one's own property. Whoever twiches up her ears (to brand the cow as his own property) is separated from the Gods, and his wealth diminishes. If a carrion crow harms her hair, decline overtakes the master's young boys who die after feel disease. Therefore cow protection is very necessary and one must not feel that the cows belong to oneself. The God-created cow belongs to any priest who comes to ask for her. To deny the cow to any Brahmin who asks for it leads to wrath of the Brahmin and the Gods. He who calls her a worthless beast the stored up treasure of Gods is sure to be shot at by a shaft of Bhava and Śarva. With pious motive if a cow is offered to a Brahmin, she will give him milk without the trouble of even milking. The deities have begged the cow, using the Brahmin as their mouth. Therefore the one who does not give her to a Brahmin incurs the enmity of all the Gods and the anger of the beasts. The mortal men should not appropriate to himself the destined portion of the Gods. If many other Brahmins beg the cow to the one who knows the truth the cow shall belong. The cow that produced first was bestowed on the deities who begged the cow. Nārada knows this secret. From times immemorial the cow has been revered as the Prince's mother. She cannot be given back when once it is bestowed on the priests. The cow which is gifted

away would come nearer to him as a good milker with rice cake as calf, and fulfils each one of his wish. The sons and grandsons of one who deems the cow fruitless and cooks her flesh at home will go abegging. Even the one who cooks the cow in his home—whether the cow is sacrificed or not—become a wrong doer of Gods and Brahmins and departs from the world dishonestly. To the one who owns a cow and has not given her away, and yields poison for him. The animal feels happy when she is bestowed upon the priests and more when she is made a sacrifice to Gods. When Nārada chose the terrible Viliptī out of all the cows and when the Gods were lurking a doubt whether she were a cow or not, Nārada said the Viliptī cow and she who drops no second calf should not be eaten by a Brahmin if he hopes for eminence. So these (Viliptī, Cow, (Vaśā) the mother of no second calf) should be given to priests when asked. The one who advises refusal of the Cow is subjected to Indra's wrath and is shot by Rudra's hand.

Sin and Danger Attached to Robbing a Brahmin of his Cow[28]

Protected by consecration, the world is the resting place, Brahman the guide, the Brahmin, the lord and ruler of the cow. If a Kṣatriya robs a Brahmin of his cows the Kṣatriya foregoes his heroism, fortune, energy and vigour, mental and bodily power, glory, honour and wealth and longevity. The bane must be endured by him if a Kṣatriya oppresses and takes to himself the terrible Brahmin's cow and hence she is held invoilable.

She is a thunderbolt when made to run, a Vaiśvānara when driven away, an arrow when she draws her hooves up, a Mahādeva when looks around, a sharp razor when she beholds, a thunder when she bellows, death when she lows, a fierce God when she whisketh her tail, utter destruction when she moves her ears sideways, consumption when she weeps, a missile when milking, pain in the head when milked, the taking away of strength when she approaches, a ruslter when roughly handled, wounding like an arrow when her mouth is fastened, contention when she is beaten, fearfully venomous when falling, darkness when she has fallen down.

The massacre of the Brahmin's Cow brings untold misery to

the man who cuts and eat her. Misery and misfortune sway him; fever and fear rage at him the Fire of Sin and Health consume him; family is broken up. Homeless, childless, and friendless he is a man whose soul is dead.

When the Kṣatriya who steals the cow of the Brahmin dies. The hungry vultures cry, rough-haired women dance around his funeral fire crying and beating their breasts. The wolves howls in his habitation. The injurer loses all the virtue, stored throughout his life and the wronged cow like a poisonous arrow pierces through his sin. Agni burns him to ashes and he is thrown into the world of Sin, with no hope of redemption. The sacred cow, like a thunderbolt hits him and tears his skin away. Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya drives him away from the regions.

Cows of yore are said to have performed to severest type of penance stretching over hundred thousand years with the sole object of becoming 'Great'.[29] The Cows are said to have performed tapas with the desire. 'We shall become the best of all kinds of sacrificial fee (Dakṣiṇa) in this world and shall not be stained with any blemish and the people bathing in water mixed with our dung shall become purified. Let the Deities and mortals use our dung for sanctifying all creatures and let those who offer us reach our Regions'. Satiated with their dispassionate and selfless tapas, Lord Brahman granted them the boon as 'The protectors of all the worlds'.

Once in the Deva Yuga, demons became Lords of the Three Worlds. Aditi, as a result of her severe austerities, bore Lord Viṣṇu in her womb. Seeing this, the illustrious Surabhi (daughter of Dakṣa) also began performing penance on the peaks of the Mount Kailāsa[30] standing on one leg for eleven thousand years to propitiate Lord Brahman, who at the close of her penance appeared before her and when asked about the boon she desired and when he was told that she was at least able to see Him and she requires no other boon, was impressed by her dispassionate disposition and He conferred on her Immortality and Permanent Abode in 'Goloka'—the region superior to the Three Worlds.

Surabhi, born to Dakṣa, was named by him. She produced from her mouth many daughters, who are regarded as the mothers of the world,[31] and were glittering like gold (Kapilas).

They were the means of sustenance for all creatures and as they began to pour milk, the froth of that milk rose high and pervaded on all sides. When the calves were sucking, some of the froth fell on the head of Mahādeva, whereupon he was infuriated and up from the third eye of Mahādeva came the wrath transforming the complexion of the Cows in different manners but those that made a spurt and reached the region of Soma could escape unhurt, retaining their original colour untarnished. Dakṣa (The Lord of all Creatures) implored Lord Śiva thus: 'You have been drenched with nectar. The milk of the froth that comes from the mouth of the calves on sucking the udders is never regarded as the impure remnant since the moon after drinking nectar gives it back in the shape of rays. So, the milk that these cows yield is having its origin in nectar and cannot therefore be treated as impure even if the udders are sucked by the calves. The Wind, The Fire, The Gold and The Ocean can never become impure. These cows support all these worlds with their milk and ghee and all creatures long to enjoy the invigorating milk.' So saying, Dakṣa gave a bull and some cows to Lord Śiva. Appeased and Gratified Mahādeva made the bull his mount and came to be known as 'The Bull-bannered Deity' henceforth. All the gods thereupon made Mahādeva the Lord of Animals. The Great Rudra thus became the Master of Cows and bore the Bull as His sign.

To speak about the Cows, to hear others speak of them; to make gifts of Cows and to witness such acts are indeed laudable and are highly auspicious and sin-cleaning.[32] The Cows are impeccable and spotless, and the sacred mantras Svāhā and Vaṣat go with them. They are the chief conductresses of sacrifices, bearing as they are the excellent yield of strength-giving nectar, and are regarded as the spring of mectar. The country which protects cows shall be resplendant, free from sins. The Cows are Goddesses competent to give everything and every want and therefore there is nothing else in the world to be regarded so high as the Cows.

Cows constitute the great source of blessing to all. Cows are the past as well the future. Cows are the source of eternal bliss. Cows are the root of prosperity.[33] Anything given to the cows should never be regarded as lost. The Cows constitute

the highest food not only for mortale but also for Deities in the form of Havis, the very substratum of sacrifice. Both morning and evening they yield Havis to the Ṛṣis for the use by them in Homas.

Sacrifices can never be conducted without the aid of curd and ghee. The character of sacrifices depends upon ghee, as cow-ghee is regarded as the very rudimentary requirement of sacrifice.[34] Cows and Brahmins form the twin branches of the same family. While the mantras are recited by the Brahmins the libations are supplied by the cows.[35] The gods in Heaven are propitiated with the libations of clarified butter prepared out of the milk of the cow. It was offered in the course of sacrifice consecrated with the recitations of Veda Mantras by Brahmins. Thus, it will be seen that the Cows and the Brahmins go hand in hand, intertwined as they are.

The cow is a locomotive benediction since it serves the gods with the food they live upon—the only concourse of a religious sacrifice. The cow is the foremost of the purifying animals.[36] Ancient persons well-versed in Vedas have declared that the Ghee manufactured from the milk of a Cow is the best of all libations.[37] Cows are said to be the limbs of sacrifice. They represent sacrifice itself. Without cows there can be no sacrifice at all and with their milk and ghee they uphold all creatures.[38]

Kapilā is implored to grant all the desires of devotees and to redeem all sins and inequities.[39] The sacrificer addresses the celestial Kapilā during Grahayajña 'Oh! you, Kapilā who are worshipped by all the gods and in whose body dwell all the sacred shrines, give me peace!'[40]

Cows are to be the life-breath of all creatures and one should never cause the least disturbance to them, while they are lying down or are engaged in other acts.[41] 'Sacrificial altars and the ground where obsequies are performed are cleansed and sanctified by the cow-dung. If the dung of the cow itself has such sanctity, which other animal can stand comparison to the Cow?'[42]

One should not so much as think of injuring a cow; but should imitate the cow (pity and pusillanimity) and have compassion towards the cows.[43] The person who protects the Cows and the Brahmins from danger in a forest becomes

himself freed from every sort of calamity, and consequential merit emulating the horse-sacrifice, besides being able to fulfil his desires and after death he goes to many auspicious regions of great felicity.[44]

Persons of mixed castes who assist the cows and Brahmins who are freed from the clutches of cruelty and are prepared to devote their lives for the sake of others shall attain success and perfection.[45]

Sacrifices of one's life on the battle-field for the sake of cows is sure to acquire the merit which is obtained by the performance of Horse Sacrifice and confers great felicity in Heaven.[46]

Daily Bath and the Cow-Dung

Of the six forms of baths viz., Brahma, Āgneya, Vāyavya, Divya, Varuṇa and Yaugika, the bath 'Vāyavya' is considered the best, i.e. rubbing one's body with the powder of burnt cow-dung.[47] In olden days earth, flowers, dried paddy, sesame seeds, sacrificial grass and pure cow-dung formed materials for bath. They used to wash their head once with earth, the navel twice, the part beneath it thrice and the feet six times and the earth should be of the quantity of a ripe myrobalan, cow-dung should also be of the same quantity.[48]

Mahendrasnanam

A person is considered to have taken this bath by taking seven paces in the midst of cows, besmeared with the particles of dust raised by their hooves.[49]

Urine of Cows

Bad luck never sticks to the place sprinkled over with the urine of a cow. The urine of a cow is endued with the efficacy of neutralising all sorts of poison and keeping off the undesired effects of demons on the household.[50]

Cowshed

The period of uncleanliness (quarantine) incidental to pollusion of a death in a cow-shed is only for one day.[51] A knowledge of Supreme Brahman, performance of obsequies in honour of one's own departed fore-fathers at Gayā, death in a cow-shed, and residence within the confines of the holy field of Kurukṣhetra are the four-fold means of salvation.[52]

Whenever a person happens to see the following things, viz., blazing fire, cow-shed, a bull, idol of a Deity, a meeting place of four roads, an old and virtuous Brahmin, he has to circumambulate them with proper devotion.[53] The sin of accepting a gift at the hand of an evil or a dishonest giver is atoned for by constantly repeating Gāyatri Mantra for one month in a cow-shed or pasture with controlled senses.[54]

Cow Worship

Brahmins, cows, fire, gold, clarified butter, sun, water, king—these are very sacred in this world. Hence one should worship and circumambulate these holy ones.[55]

The Lord has been born among mortals (according to His will) with the object of protecting the cows, goodmen, deities, Brahmins and Vedas.[55a]

Dharma is reposed in six forms, Donation of Cows, recitals of the Sacred Scriptures, the performance of virtuous deeds, the speaking of truth, devotion to the cow, devotion to charity.[55b]

Cows are Goddesses and abode of auspiciousness, and hence they always deserve worship.[56]

A person who worships every day the substance called Gorocana—a bright yellow pigment prepared from the urine of a cow or found in the head of a cow—is regarded as one who worships the whole universe with the Deities and Demons human beings.[57] Sage Vasiṣtha glorified the cow in his worship saying 'Yayā sarvamidam vyāptam jagatsthāvara jangamam Tām Dhenum Śirasā vaṁde Bhutabhavyasyamātaram' which means 'Bending my head unto her with reverence I adore the cow who is the mother of both the past and the future and by whom the entire cosmos of mobile and immobile creatures is suffused.[58]

Śuka after knowing the greatness of cows from Vyāsa began to worship cows every day.[59] A person who is devoted to cows succeeds in obtaining the accomplishment of every wish of His.[60] Same is the case with women also. He that desires sons and daughters, wealth or religious merit, knowledge or felicity succeeds in acquiring them. In short there is nothing that is unattainable to one devoted to cows.[61]

Even in the age of Kṛta Brahman solicited Śiva to take kindly to cows and Śiva approved the sanctity of the cows, and that is why even to this day a bull is considered the emblem of Lord Śiva. Śiva always sports with them, and hence the necessity to worship the cows. The cows possess great power besides being the givers of boons.[62] When Indra came to hear of the story of the illustrious Surabhi and the origin of Goloka, he began to worship the cows daily and show them the greatest reverence.[63]

The Worship of Cow in the Worshop of Hari

The God Hari should be worshipped on the 15th day of the full-moon day in the month of Āśvayuja. The Gods Rudra, Aja, the Sun, Lakṣmī and Fire should be worshipped with libations of clarified butter, taking only curd on the day of worship. The worshipper should worship the cows and circumambulate the sacrificial Fire. The ceremony terminates with a Bull fight etc., after which salt should be given to the cows and honorarium to the Brahmins.[63a] This ceremony is performed occasionally also. Then the rite begins with the worship of God Viṣṇu at the centre of the mystic diagram laid out on the ground. The Gods should be worshipped on the different sides of the Maṇḍala, the cows that guard the different quarters of heaven should be worshipped.[64] During Cāturmāsya one should particularly worship cows.[64a] It is the gods, the Brahmins, the cows, the holy sages and the chaste wives that form the mainstay of the Universe. Hence they are the objects of reverence.[65] Pṛthu earnestly prays in the following way 'May Brahmins, the cows and Janārdana along with his followers be pleased with me.'[66] It is stated that those kings who are devoted to the cows, Govinda and Brahmins are very fortunate. They will not meet with any

misfortune.[67] Moreover a person meets with a hasty destruction who reviles the deities, the Vedas, Cows, Brahmins, sages, Dharma (religious duty).[68] Lord Kṛṣṇa instructs Yadus (i.e. the Cowherds) to worship with devotion the deities, Brahmins and cows.[69]

Pancagavya in the Expiatory Rites

A man having gone on fast should on the fourteenth day of the fortnight, take the composition known as the Pañcagavya, on the next day he should not eat any meat. By doing so every fortnight a man is redeemed from all his sins.[70] A person who kills a cow unwillingly shall practise self-control for a month sharing the same shed with the cows, and leading them to pasture and drink the sacred compound Pañcagavya, the five things obtained from a cow, consisting of milk, curd, clarified butter, urine and dung.[71] Somewhere it is said that a person who takes the diet of the composition consisting of the dung and urine of a cow and the curd and Kṣīra prepared out of milk is sure to absolve the most abject sinner like a caṇḍāla from all impieties.[72] In days of yore, Gods advised the vow of Great Santapana, an expiatory rite which absolves one from all sins. The penitent while observing this rite has to subsist on the diet composed of the secretions and evacuations of the body of a cow as well as the preparations of her milk.[73] In the vow Kṛchchrātikṛchchram, the penitent should subsist only on milk during the entire period. It is stated that ancients practised this penance in olden days whereby they obtained purity and ascended to the region of the Gods.[74]

During the period of the practice of the vow of Tapta Kṛchcham the practiser would live on the warm urine of a cow for the first three days, on warm clarified butter for the next three days and on warm milk for the next three days and on air for the last three days.[75] During the period of the vow of Śīta Kṛchcham, the penitent should live on the cold substances that are mentioned in the above Vrata i.e. Tapta Kṛchcham.[76]

Somewhere Kṛchra Santapana vow is described.[77] In this the penitent has to subsist on the urine of cows, dung, milk, sour milk, clarified butter and the water of Kuśa grass respectively

for six days, and, on the seventh day (day and night) he has to fast. This is known as Kṛchra Santapana vow. One should take Pañcagavya for one's purification of body.[78]

Ritual of Cow-Gift and Pancagavya

A person who offers a cow to a Brahmin should for three nights adopt the vow of cow, i.e., Govrata and pass one night, with cows. He should recommence from the eighthday (Aṣṭami) of the fortnight (Kāmyāṣṭami) to observe a vow for three nights subsisting himself entirely on milk and urine and dung of the cow.[79]

A person who unscrupulously accepts when a Śūdra ignites the fire intended for the libations or allows unmindful of women assisting at Śrāddhas and other rites is subject to the wrath of the three sacrificial fires. In his next life he has to take birth as a Śūdra. His forefathers and deities are never gratified with him.

Expiation for Cleansing Oneself from Such Sins

Fasting all the while, one should for three days, with concentration pour libations on the sacred fire of the urine of the cow mixed with cow-dung and milk and ghee.[80] The deities accept the offerings of such a man on the expiry of one year. His forefathers also are gratified with him, when he performs obsequies.

Bhisma Pancakam

The vow of Bhīṣma Pañcaka should be observed on the eleventh day of the bright fortnight in the month of Kārtīka.[81] The performer sould however observe a vow of silence on the occasion, bathe thrice daily for five days commencing from the very first day of the vow and sleep on the bare floor during the period taking cow dung, urine, curd, milk and the composition of Pañcagavya, respectively on the first day (Ekādaśi), second day, third day, fourth day and the fifth day of its observance. He should break his fast and vow in the night of the fullmoon,

whereby he gets redeemed from the tribulations of life after a happy and prosperous career on earth. This Vrata is named after the hero Bhīṣma, who practised it and consequently attained God Hari.[82]

The Sanctity of the Gift of Cow

The great knowledge of the gift of cows and the ritual of the cow-gift and many sacred things regarding cows are revealed by Brahman to Indra.[83] Later Indra imparted this knowledge to Daśaratha, who, in turn passed on the same to his son Rāma through whom it came to his brother Lakṣmaṇa. While dwelling in the woods, Lakṣmaṇa preached it to the sages. Thus, it has come down from generation to generation to the sages of rigid vows. The sages later propagated the said cult among themselves as well the righteous kings on earth. Bhīṣma communicated this to Yudhiṣṭhira. It is held that a Brahmin reciting it every day in the assemblage of Brahmins during the performance of sacrifices or at gifts of cows or when two persons meet together, obtains many regions of inexhaustible felicity and assured abode with the deities.

However, one should not impart this knowledge to a person who is not one's disciple or to one who is not the observant of vows or to one who is bereft of faith or is crooked in nature.[84] If this ritual is imparted to such men and devil-like persons, it would lead to evil. It should not also be imparted to sinful persons who are atheists. Enlightened by Bhīṣma, Yudhiṣṭhira made many gifts of cows and began to subsist himself on grains or barley and on cow dung as his food and drink. He began to worship cows with utmost devotion after taking their names.[85]

A person who makes a gift of the cow or sings in praise any hymn or rescues her life from crisis ensures the salvation of all souls connected with his life.[86] The cow should never be given away to a slaughterer; similarly she should never be given to any tiller or atheist or to one whose occupation is the keeping of the cows.[87] It is held that a person who makes the gift of a cow to any such sinful persons has to sink into ever-lasting hell.[88]

Morning and evening cows yield to the sages Havis for use in Homa. And for this reason a person making a gift of cow

succeeds in transcending all sins committed by him and wards off all kinds of calamities into which he may get himself entangled.[89] Those good men, who free themselves from pride and make gifts of cows, are regarded as doers of righteous deeds and as givers of all articles and are therefore assuredly destined to attain the highly sacred region of cows.[90]

A bovine bull is the embodiment of heaven and one gifting a bovine bull to an accomplished Brahmin will receive great honours in heaven.[91]

Some Important Points of Sanctity of Cow

Food to Cows

A person giving morsels of food daily to a cow is sure to ascend to heaven after death. The man who provides a cow even belonging to another, with similar morsels of food is vouchsafed the same merit. The region of Brahman is vouchsafed to a man who does anything for the welfare of the bovine species in general.[92] One providing cows with food even for a single day shall by virtue of his said act be granted by the gratified cow a fourth part of the merits he may win by all his good acts.[93] When it is so, the importance of protecting and feeding the cow is discernible to anybody's guess.

The oblations offered to one's manes in the course of a Śraddha should be offered to a cow for eating at the close of the ceremony.[94] This practice is in vogue even today from times old.

Water Dropped from Cow's Horns

Formerly, cows were hornless and for the sake of being adorned with horns they adored the eternal and puissant Brahman who ultimately granted them their wish and hence the horns of cow are treated as sacred and sin-cleansing.[95] Even a particle of water dropped down from the horn of a cow engaged in scratching her body is capable of redeeming all sins.[96]

A person who after rising at dawn and taking with him some quantity of water and a few blades of Kuśa grass, proceeds into

a cow-shed and washes a cow's horns by sprinkling there that water with those blades of Kuśa grass and then drips down the water on his head is regarded in consequence of such a bath as one that has bathed in all the sacred waters existing in the three worlds and that are adored and resorted to by Siddhas Cāraṇas. A person who has faith in this ritual will surely obtain a high merit and great happiness.[97]

Touch of the Cows

Hallowed is the touch of a cow and the ground on which she stays. No sort of defect lies on the ground which is purified by the breath of a cow.[98] A person rising at dawn and touching a cow, ghee and curds, mustard-seeds, larger variety of priyaṅgu is sure to become cleansed of all his sins.[99] When one is impure or polluted, one should never touch either a cow or Fire or a Brahmin for the obvious reason that they are equally energetic.[100] One should touch the back of a cow and bow one's head to her tail.[101] One should never try to kick or touch with one's feet a cow. To kick at cows or to proceed through the midst of cows is considered a sin.[102] So one should never even so much as touch with one's foot either a cow or a Brahmin of high energy or a blazing fire, if one is endued with faith and aspires for one's own welfare.

Infamy spreads to him who lifts up his feet for kicking a cow or a highly noble Brahmin or a blazing fire and the same ultimately touches the confines of heaven. His forefathers become enveloped with fear. The deities also become highly dissatisfied with him. The Fire refuses to accept the libations offered by him. He has to rot in hell a hundred lives without any rescue at any time. Therefore one should never even so much as touch a cow with one's feet, let alone kicking the same.[103] One should never injure cows and Brahmins in any manner.[104]

Milking of the Cows

One should not milk a cow many times, that is to say one should draw out the milk continually if not continuously at one stretch. One should not disturb a person who is milking a cow. One

should not attend even a guest while one is milking a cow. That is why it is stated that a guest should wait till the cow is milked.[105]

It is sinful if one milks a cow whose calf is very young moved by the desire of obtaining from her as much milk as possible. Moreover, even those who drink milk of cows whose calves are very young will never be blessed with children for perpetuation of their progeny. Such men see their children die and their races ceasing.[106]

Service to the Cow

By following the cows every day into the woods, subsisting merely on grass and cow-dung and leaves, with no worldly wants and ties, with restrained senses free from desires and with serene mind rid of improper motives and pious drive to serve the cows one can aim at attaining the region of Brahman or any other region of his choice and live with all the deities.[107] There is a vow of serving a herd of cattle. While observing this vow one should wash his body with the urine of a cow, live on diet consisting of the preparations of her milk, tend a herd of cows leading them to fresh pasture daily and eat his meals only after the cows are fed. A man by leading such a life is called the observer of Govrata. The vow should be observed continuously for a month and consequently he would be absolved from all his sins and can ascend to heaven. Ultimately he visits the highest abode of cows.[108] One serving the cows with devotion and reverence and following them with devotion and humility succeeds in obtaining many invaluable boons from cows since they become gratified with his service. One should never even so much as entertain the thought of doing injury to the cows. Instead he must relish ideas to always confer happiness and comfort on the cows and adore them with reverence and devotion, with head bent down. Such a person with restrained senses will be filled with cheerfulness and he succeeds in attaining that felicity enjoyed by the cows.[109]

Tanks for Cows

That man, in whose tank cows quench their thirst and righteous men draw water, rescues all his race.[110] That man in whose tank water is perennial (available in autumn also) for the above purpose shall attain the equal merit attached to the gift of thousand cows; while the man in whose tank cows quench their thirst, acquires the merit of a horse-sacrifice.[111] The whole race of that man, in whose tank or lake cows and Brahmins and righteous people frequently quench their thirst, is rescued from hell since he will be washed of his sins.[112] The pools are considered to be a sanctuary, wherefrom a cow drinks water to her heart's content. The sacred shrines such as the Ganges etc., should be deemed lying in the body of a cow.[113] From this it is evident that by the mere touch of a cow, while she is drinking water, the people are changed into sanctuaries like the Ganges and the like. Moreover, it should be mentioned that while the cow is drinking it should not be disturbed.[114]

Tending the Cattle a Sacred Duty

The food prepared by a person other than a Brahmin should not be taken by a Brahmin.[115] Gopa a cow-herd being an exception. It is clear from the above statement that the caste Gopas stands next to Brahmins in respect of sanctity,[116] as the cows are holy and blissful and the universe owes its existence to the bovine species. Fortunate enough are therefore the cow-herds who always engage themselves in tending and keeping such holy ones.

Bad Dreams

A person who has an evil dream should take the names of cows.[117] Somewhere else it is seen that a man who had a bad dream should take a composition of Pañcagavya.[118]

Urine and Dung

One should never feel any repugnance for the urine and the

dung of the cow.[119] It is evident from a story of Mahā-Bhārata that the dung and urine of cows are endued with prosperity.[120] One should bathe using cow-dung to rub over the body at the time. One should sit on dried cow-dung and should never cast one's urine and excreta and other secretions on cow-dung.[121] The one who subsists upon the gruel of barley picked up every day from cow-dung becomes cleansed of sins even as grave as the slaughter of a Brahmin. In days of yore once gods after being defeated by demons practised this expiation, and resultantly succeeded in retaining their position.[122]

Cow Hide and Ghee

One should eat ghee sitting on a cow-hide purified by dipping it in water and then sitting towards the west, with restrained speech. One should eat ghee using the bare earth as one's dish. As a result one enjoys that prosperity which cows yield.[123]

The Merit of Taking Hot Urine, Milk, Ghee & Air

It is described that one should drink the hot urine of a cow for three days and then switch over to subsist on hot milk of a cow for the next three days and again switch over to subsist on hot ghee for the next three days. Ghee being the sacred thing the deities enjoy regions of great felicity with the aid of ghee, the sacred of the sacred things. For the next three days, the observer of the vow should subsist merely on air.[124] One should bear the ghee on one's head. One should pour libations of ghee on the sacred fire. By making gifts of ghee one should cause the Brahmins utter benedictions on oneself. As a reward of this act one is sure to attain that prosperity which belongs to cows.[125]

The Sanctity of the Bull

The mud raised by the horns of a bull of a blue complexion, from the banks of a river or lake succeeds without doubt in sending the pitṛs of the person who sets the bull free to the region of Soma.[126] One should with devotion circumambulate

the bull.[127] Bullocks are engaged in assisting at tillage and thereby produce diverse kinds of paddy and other seeds.[128] They should never be struck with a goad, rod or whip except in tillage. Those who apply a goad to bullocks at the time of ploughing incurs no sin. In the other acts they should never be struck with the goad or the whip. Formerly the deities, while tilling the earth performed a sacrifice, and used the goad for striking the bullocks yoked to the plough.[129]

The Chants of Cows

One should always chant the name of cows.[130] A person who recites the name of amiable and efficacious surabhi is redeemed off all his sins committed previously by day or night or by the two twilights, in a conscious or unconscious state. He becomes completely purified. He will never become blind or deaf. He always succeeds in attaining all benefits. He will never take birth in the intermediate order of being and never goes to hell. He never takes birth in any mixed caste and will never become stupefied.[131]

Gomati Mantra

A person who after consecrating the sesamum seeds with the incantation of Gomatī, and adorning that form of cow with all kinds of gems offers to a noble Brahmin should never suffer any grief on account of omission and commission. Gomatī Mantra is as follows :

Gāvo māmupatiṣṭhantu hemaśṛngyaḥ payomucaḥ
Surabhyaśśaurabheyyaśca saritaḥ sāgaraṃ yathā
Gāvai paśyāmyahaṃ nityaṃ gāvaḥ paśyantumāṃ sadā
Gāvo Asmākam vayam tāsāṃ yatogāvastato vayam

Chapter 78 Verses 22 and 23

While uttering thus at night or day, in happiness or misery and even at times of great fear, a man is sure to be freed from fear.[132] One should mentally recite these sacred mentras that are known

by the name of Gomatī, after touching water in a pure state, staying a while in the midst of cows. As a consequence thereof one becomes purified.

Brahmins of righteous deeds cleansed by the study of Vedas and observance of vows should, only in the midst of a sacred fire or cows or assemblies of Brahmins, impart to their disciples a knowledge of the Gomatī mantras which are in every way as good as a sacrifice. It means a person reciting these mantras derives the equal merit attached to the person performing a sacrifice. One should observe a fast for three nights for receiving the boon that can be granted by the man who is desirous of obtaining a son may obtain one by chanting these mantras. A person who desires wealth may have his desire fulfilled by the same means. The girl desirous of a good husband may have her desire fulfilled by adoring these mantras. One may obtain the fulfilment of every wish cherished by one by simply adoring these sacred mantras. The cows gratified with the service one renders them, without doubt, grant the same, capable as they are to bring to fruition the wish of such a person.[133]

Having been purified by touching water a man should recite the following Mantra both in the morning and evening. By reciting it a man is sure to be redeemed from all the sin he commits during the day.[134]

Mantra

Ghṛta kṣīrapradā gāvo ghṛtayonyo ghṛtodbhavāḥ
Ghṛtanadyo ghṛtāvartāstāme santu sadā gṛhe
Ghṛtam me hṛdaye nityam ghṛtaṃ nābhyāṃ pratiṣṭhitaṃ
Ghṛtam me sarveṣu gātreṣu ghṛtum me manasi sthitam
Gāvo mamāgrato nityam gāvo pṛṣṭhata eva ca
Gāvo me sarvataścaiva gavām madhye vasāmyhaṃ

Chapter 80 Verses 1, 2 and 3

One should also recite the following Mantra :

'*Surūpa Bahurūpāśca viśwarūpāśca mātaraḥ*
Gāvo māmupa tiṣṭhantāṃ'

Chapter 80 Verse 11

One should also recite the following Mantra. With steadiness of a vow (Prajāpati himself declared its power) :

> *'Yugaṃdharāh surūpā Bahurupāśca*
> *Viśwarūpāśca mātaraḥ'*

Chapter 81 Verse 32

Cows are the foremost of all things in the world. They are verily the refuge of the universe. They are the mothers of the gods. They are incomparable.[135] People should cherish cows for obtaining prosperity and peace. Cows represent the highest energy both in this world and the world that is above. There is nothing more sacred or sanctifying than the cows. They are the givers of boons.[136] Amṛta, Brahmins and cows, these three are regarded as equal.[137] Cows have in them the element of wisdom. They are the source of that immortality which sacrifice achieves, they lead to the extension of one's race. They aid one to obtain heaven.[138] Cyavana said to Nahuṣa that he was competent only to proclaim a part of the greatness of cows and he had not the ability to exhaust the subject.[138a]

One should regard bulls as fathers and cows as mothers of the universe. To worship them is no less than worshipping manes and deities. Assembly halls, a place of watering cattle, and temples are besmeared with cow-dung. When that is so, what to speak more about the sanctity of cow![138b]

The Sanctity of Kapila

The performer of Fire Sacrifice, Kapilā, Sacrificer, a monk and great ocean—these objects capable of sanctifying any by mere sight. One should therefore look upon them with awe and reverence.[138c]

Of all the ten varieties of Kapilā four are said to have greater merit and sin-cleansing power. By saluting or by mere seeing them will redeem all sins of a person.[138d]

Fortune victory and great fame always present in a house where there are the sanctifying Kapilās. The bull bannered lord gets delight when he is consecrated with milk. All the deities get

delight by curd and fire gets delight by Ghee. A person who offers either Ghee or milk, or curd or the preparation of rice-boiled-with-milk to a well-versed Brahmin even once is relieved of his sins.[138e]

A person who with controlled senses observes fast for one day and night has to take the five products of a Kapilā. This observance is more meritorious than a Cāndrayaṇa Vrata. On the day of Viṣuva (equinox) a person who consecrates milk to Śiva or Viṣṇu obtains the equal merit of a horse sacrifice. The same person goes to the region i.e., Śiva or Viṣṇu.[138f]

The gift of Kapilā is fraught with more merit. One aspiring for auspicious regions after death should offer a Kapilā. During the offer all the following deities reside in the limbs of Kapilā.[139] In the horns Viṣṇu, and Indra reside. The moon and Indra reside in the fore-parts of the horns. In the middle part of the horns resides Brahma. Īśwara resides in the forehead. In her ears Aśvins reside. In her eyes the moon and the Sun reside. In her teeth the wind Gods reside. In her tongue Sarasvatī resides. In her roots of hair all the sages reside. Prajāpati resides in her skin. In her exhaled air all the Vedas reside along with auxilaries. In the nasal holes all the fragrant flowers reside. In her lower lip all the Vasus reside and in her face the fire is set up. In her sides Sādhyas reside. In her neck Pārvati resides. In her back stars reside. On her hump the sky stays. In her anus all the sacred rivers flow. In her urine the sacred Ganges flows. The goddess of Riches resides in her dung. In her nose Goddess Jyeṣṭā resides. In her thighs all the paternal deities reside. In her tail Rāma resides. At her two sides, there are universal deities. On her head valiant Guha resides. All the five primeival winds stay at her loins, thighs and laps. In the middle part of hoofs Gandharvas reside. On her above part all the snakes reside. Her four udders constitute the four oceans.

Delight, intellect, forbearance, Svāhā, reverence, peace, self composure, reminiscence, fame, resplendance, action, charm, satiety, nourishment, progeny (affluence) quarters, side quarters intermediary quarters, all these resort to Kapilā. The celestial Gods, paternal deities, Gandharvas, celestial nymphs all the worlds, islands, oceans, sacred rivers, such as Ganges,

Vedas along with auxilaries and sacrifices, all these praise elaborately the Kapilā cow with Vedic chants. All the deities while staying in the sky praise Kapilā.

Sanctity

Brahma granted a boon to cows and accordingly they will get salvation in one birth, i.e. the cows that die certainly get salvation. Even an iota of sin does not exist in their bodies.[140] The products of cow are all of sanctifying nature. By taking these products all get themselves purified. The Pāyasa prepared with the cow-milk is considered the best and highly auspicious. The one who takes Pāyasa prepared with cow's milk emits from his body a fine aroma while the one who does not, emits a foul smell.[141] Evil spirits do not even as much as approach the one who subsists on Pāyasa, while they take out the essence of one's food, who does not take Pāyasa.

The Pāyasa sprinkled with Cow Ghee becomes million fold more meritorious than the ordinary Pāyasa.[142] It is meant for libations also. For this underlying reason, the producer of such a great thing (milk), cow has been extolled in all yugas.[143]

In her, Dharma is well-established, riches abide. She is the very embodiment and yielder of desires—one may have any desire granted by the cow—not only in this world but also salvation after death.[144]

Lord holds that vedas (holy scriptures) are His words (commandments), His Brahmins face, cows His body, deities His limbs, good people (righteous) His very life-breath and whenever atheists annoy Dharma He will manifest Himself age after age.[145]

Some More Meritorious Deeds are Prescribed to Obtain Great Merit

One should with holy reverence circumambulate the cow, the very embodiment of riches and bow down to her. In consequence of such an act, one obtains heaven permanently.[146] One is regarded as Mahādeva and Bṛahspati (the preceptor of Gods) by adopting the said course. One who observes the same seven

times emulates Indra and gets immense wealth.[147]

If a person rising at early dawn and taking with him some water and Kuśa reeds, proceeds into a cow-pen and washes the cow-horns and bathes with that water dripped down on his head from the cow's horns is regarded, as a result of his merttorious deed, as one that has performed ablutions in all the sacred waters that exist in the three worlds.[148]

It is also a sanctifying and meritorious act to touch the cow or ghee, or honey or white mustard seeds and Priyaṅgu creepers immediately when one rises from his bed.[149]

Cow is regarded as a Brahmin, Hari, the Ganges, Brahma. Cows are the very kith and kin of mortals; while mortals are the very kith and kin of cows. Hence, it is stated that the house in which atleast even a single cow is not there is indeed an empty house.[150]

Lord Kṛṣṇa touched the bodies of each cow with his auspices hand, when innumerable cows were running towards him with udders brimming with milk on account of the affection with ears and tails lifted, and their calves lowing and accompanying them. The cows surrounded his chariot when he returned from Mathura, did not allow Him to proceed. In ineffable joy He smothered them. The cow-herds and Uddhava standing off were struck with wonder on seeing the mutual tie of affection of Gopāla and Cows and they talked among themselves in glorification of same.[151]

All Vedas with auxilaries took shelter in the face of a cow. In her horns, Śiva and Viṣṇu reside. In her womb, Skanda resides. Brahma resides on her head. At the top of her horns, Indra resides. Aśvins reside in her ears. In her eyes, the Moon and the Sun reside. In her teeth Garuḍa resides. On her tongue sacred Ganges stays. In her arms all sacred rivers flow. In her urine also the sacred Ganges flows. In all the roots of hairs the sages reside. At the forepart and at the rear, Yama resides. Kubera and Varuṇa took shelter at the right side of her body. At the left part, Yakṣas reside. In the midst of her face Gandharvas reside. At the top of her nose, Pannagas reside. At the back side of her hoofs Apsaras reside. The very Goddess of Fortune resides in her dung.[152] In her urine the spouse of great God Śiva resides. At the upper part of her feet semidivine be-

ings reside. In her lowing there is Prajāpati. In her udders, all the four oceans are present.[153] A person who touches a cow daily is redeemed from his major sins. He who wears the dust trodden by the hoofs of a cow will be redeemed from his sins and regarded as one who performed ablution in a sacred river.[154]

He who lets loose a bull along with four calves on behalf of his paternal deities is a fortune son indeed. As a result of his meritorious act, he is sure to enjoy great pleasures in heaven as many years as there are hairs on the body of that bull and the heifers. The water which is sprinkled upwards by the tail of the bull becomes ambrosia for a period of thousand years to his forefathers. The mud trodden by the hoofs of the bull certainly becomes Svadhā to his ancestors in the heaven for an innumerable years.[155]

The water dropped either from the leaves of Tulaśī (Basil) or the symbol of Maheśwara which is known as 'Salagrama' or the horns of a cow or the feet of a Brahmin is stated to be the best of sanctifiers even to the most venerable persons. Therefore, one can infer that the cow stands out in its sanctifying efficacy. One acquires the same merit by making gifts or resorting to pilgrimages or performing sacrifices, taking vows or igniting sacrificial fires.[156]

The sacrificial altar of a house should be smeared with the cow-dung. The seat, the stick, the vessels, and the ground—all should be sprinkled with the water mixed with dung.[157] The herd of cows and a deity, a Brahmin, clarified butter, honey and a place where four roads meet (junction) and well-known auspicious trees—these should be circumambulated with holy reverence.[158]

Beef-Eating

Once upon a time, Vasiṣṭha's disciples slaughtered Vasiṣṭha's cow in their father's ceremony. A part of the flesh was given away to the Brahmins and rest was shared by them. Afterwards, they reported to their Guru that the cow was devoured by a tiger. But the preceptor could realise with his mystic vision what has gone before. He imprecated a curse upon them that

they should become Caṇḍālas. Then the disciples trembled, out of fear and represented that even Vasiṣṭha had told them many a time that by offering beef during ceremonies, even the most heinous people would be purified. They requested him to alleviate the effect of the curse. Then Vasiṣṭha told them that after taking birth as Caṇḍālas they would not part with the knowledge of Śāstras and their previous birth. Finally they would get salvation after being born in the sinful wombs of low birth.[159]

Beef in ceremonies by cheating other's cows is therefore not capable of bringing any merit, on the other hand, from the above it can be inferred that such an act is fraught with adverse effect.

Feeding a Cow—More Meritorious

If one, who has lost all his riches on the day of his father's ceremony, offers grass to the cows verily acquires more merit than the performance of ceremony itself.

Object Lesson

Once upon a time, there lived a poor Brahmin and bewailed at his inability to perform his father's ceremony. On that day, he approached a Brahmin and requested him to show a way out of that predicament. The Brhamin suggested him that before passing the third part of the day he should offer grass to a cow.

Then according to his counsel he took some grass and offered it to a cow in order to satisfy the departed soul of his father. By the merit of the virtuous act he attained the abode of Gods.[160]

Whoever offers land for the pasture of cows can never be separated from heaven, in other words, he is sure to dwell in heaven permanently. Added to this, he also acquires the merit of having donated a cow.[161]

The bath with clarified butter increases one's wealth and longevity. The bath with cow dung is superb, and increases one's prosperity. The bath by curd is also stated to be superb and regarded as increasing one's riches.[162]

The protection of cows should be done by a king as the cows are sacred, resorted to by all, and all worlds, are well-establis-

hed in cows i.e. all worlds depend upon cows for their sustenance.[163]

Cows perpetuate sacrifices and they are mothers to the entire universe. The dung and urine verily remove poverty. One should worship with effort both dung and urine of a cow as the very Goddess of Fortune, well-established in them. Knowing this one should not entertain even for a moment any repugnance towards them. One should never cast, spit saliva and do other things on the urine and dung of a cow. The dust raised by the hoof of a cow is very sacred and removes poverty and impediments.[164]

Even scratching on the body of a cow removes all sins. The water dropped from the horns is equal to the water of the Ganges. The bath and drink of the group of these vaccines namely urine, dung, milk, curd, ghee and Rocana either severally or collectively are also considered very sacred.[165]

Rocana also is said to be the sacred and guarding protector and acts as an antidote to poison of a snake and all diseases.[166]

A person who wakes up early in the morning and sees his image in the ghee will be redeemed from all his sins and his sin never increases.[167]

By offering grass to the cows one gets great merit. A person should not own more number of cows than he could afford to look after them properly. Otherwise, the distressed cows render him go to hell.[168]

One gets great merit by offering grass to other's cow. One who offers grass likewise during the whole of the cold-season (Śiśira) will get heaven for a period of six hundred years.[169] Both morning and evening it is said that the gods arrange meals for the mortals. During the same period one has to offer fodder to the cows promptly. If this kind of austerity is practised regularly and punctually for one year the Scriptures vouchsafe the world of cows for him, for a period of one Manu age.[170]

While a cow grazes in the pasture a person who offers water to her is sure to go to the abode of Varuṇa and there he sports and enjoys the pleasure for a period of one millon years.[171] He gets immense satiety wherever he goes. A person who cultivates the pastures of cows with plough goes to dreadful

hell and suffers there for a period of fourteen Indra-ages.[172]

A person who obstructs while the cows are drinking is considered to be equal to Braminicide.[173]

In olden days kings used to perform Atisantapanam for warding off all misfortunes. It yields all wished-for objects and removes all misfortunes.[174]

Kṛchchāti Kṛchra may be performed subsisting barely on milk for a period of twenty-one days. By performing this the kings become purified. The penitent must drink hot urine for three days and the next three days hot ghee and the next three days drink hot milk and subsist for the next three days on air only. This is known as Tapta Kṛchchra also and it can remove all misfortunes. This is known as Śītakrchchra, when the penitent subsists on the cold products of the cow as said above. This is revealed by Brahman himself.

One should bathe with cow urine and subsist on milk. When the cow stands he should remain standing; but when she sits he should not sit. If she does not take fodder, he should not take food and if she does not drink water, he too must not drink water. When the cow does not have shelter, he should not seek after a shelter to protect himself. When she is afflicted with fear he should protect her at the cost of even his very life. This is known as Govrata. To the person who performs this every month, the Vrata removes all sins and the performer of this vow goes to the world of Cows. A person subsisting on barley which is left after being eaten by a cow daily, succeeds in the fulfilment of his desires for a period of fourteen Indra-ages.[175]

A person while reciting morning and evening the Gomatī Mantras whatever his desire be, succeeds in attaining it in a month.[176]

The cows and the Brahmins form the two bifurcated branches of the same family. The Mantras reside in the Brahmins, the libations abide in the cows.[177]

It is the deities, the Brahmins, the cows, the sages and the chasteful women that uphold the entire universe. Hence they are invariable objects of reverence.[178]

The tank in which cows drink water to quench their thirst may be considered as the River Saraswatī. In that place where

cows reside, the Ganges also resides. Prosperity abounds in this dust trodden by them. In the dry cow-dung Goddess of Fortune resides. The act of obeissance to cow itself is Dharma. Hence they should be adored with devotion.[179]

Cows are regarded as sacred, auspicious and all the worlds subsist upon them for their sustenance.[180]

Viṣṇu is stated as the Sacrifice. That Sacrifice is verily established in cows. Hence cows are proclaimed as Viṣṇu himself by ancients.[181]

A person who recites this holy chapter viz., Sanctity of the Cow will be redeemed from his sins and enjoys comforts with deities. He who even listens to this chapter obtains great merit and is redeemed from the sin committed by him in his past seven births.[182]

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8

Medicinal Values

Since Ṛgvedic times, the milk of the cow and its byproducts have been held highly useful for the human subsistence. It is a very healthy food, nutritive and hygienic and gives energy, health and strength.

In the Ṛgveda, the cow is extolled as Amṛtasya nābhiḥ,[1] the navel of ambrosia and the clarified butter as Amṛtasya cakṣaṇam,[2] the semblance of nectar.

The white Soma Juice mixed wtih milk is adverted to as the drink meant for Indra and other gods like Maruts, Rudras etc.[3] The filtered juice of Soma mixed with curd (Dadhyāśir) is said to be the delicious beverage of Indra.[4]

Indeed Savitṛ shines with resplendence by subsisting on ghee only. He is described as one who stretches his hands consisting of ghee upwards for the protection of all worlds. He could protect all the worlds by subsisting on ghee and ghee alone.[5]

Ūrvaśī states that during the separation period of her lover, she could subsist by taking a little quantity of clarified butter.[6]

The ancient sages while extolling the milk of cow in a hymn held that the [milk along with other ingredients offered as sacrifice is a health-and-strength-giving delicious juice.[7] Elsewhere they held that the cows subsisting on the sap of tender plants give plenty of delicious and strength-giving milk.[7a] Śadhyas and Vasus having drunk the cow milk adored it in the bright one's (Sun) dwelling place.[7b]

The milk of Surabhi, the celestial cow and the mother of the bovine species, is said to be useful to Nāgas as Sudhā, to forefathers as Svadhā and to deities as Amṛta.[8]

Indra also stated that the milk of cow is nothing short of nectar.[8a] Vasiṣṭha by taking the milk of cow (Nandinī) could remain unchanged in youth for a period of ten thousand years.[8b] From this it may be inferred that the milk of cows is conducive to ever-lasting youth and longevity. Even the foam of cow milk is strength giving. Upamanyu subsisted on the foam of cow milk when his preceptor prevented him from taking milk, and became fat.[9]

The celestial cow Surabhi's milk is indeed Amṛta, the nectar, this is known from the story of Nāḍījaṅgha when he came to life again, by the touch of the foam of her milk even after being consumed by Fire and reduced to ashes.[10]

The Garuḍa Purāṇa enumerates the qualities of the cow products in the preparation of medicines, that are potent in curing many diseases such as Cedema, Ocular-diseases, abdominal-colic of pregnant women, pthisis, leucoderma, spleen enlargement, piles etc.

Milk

Nagara roots when taken with milk and Suvarcala salt with half quantity of Śivaghṛta is a remedy to all forms of diseases of the heart.[11]

Ten Hāritakis successively increasing day by day if taken for ten days with milk, cures splenic-enlargement.[12]

An oedema or Anasarcha patient should take Pippali along with the vehicle of milk or cow's urine, or Abhaya and treacle.[13]

Plasters of Abhaya fried with melted-butter or Triphala pasted with milk or a lukewarm solution of a paste of Sunthi, Nimba leaves and a small quantity of rock salt, if poured constantly into the eyes proves efficacious in all forms of occular diseases.[14]

Lakṣmaṇa Juice along with milk when taken leads to the conception of a male child.[15] Half Āḍakams measure of milk cooked with Aśvagandha and clarified butter when taken by a woman is sure to confer male progeny on her.[16]

Milk cooked in combination with the roots of Kuśa, Uruvuka and Gokṣeera and sweetened with sugar should be employed for the alleviation of uterine or abdominal colic of pregnant women.[17]

In the absence of mother's milk cows milk may be given to children.[18]

Milk cooked with powdered pippali and if taken with the combination of honey, sugar, and clarified butter cures cough, heart diseases and chronic fevers.[19] The expressed juice of Kākajaṅgha as well as the serous fluid extracted from cow-dung taken with milk cures chronic fevers. Milk cooked with Sunṭhi acts as a good febrifuge.[20]

Patient of pthisis should subsist on milk whereby his health and intellect would be improved.[21] Even the powder of crab shells with milk cures pthisis or consumption.[22]

Dry gāmbhari roots cooked in combination with milk is a medicine to suklapittam.[23] Washing the body with milk in the morning removes the evils of perspiration.[24]

Butter

Butter and sugar taken after meal tend to improve one's intellect.[25] A vigorous person should lick butter along with sugar and honey.[26] A plaster composed of Kuṣtam and Nāgavala pasted together with butter and if applied to the breasts it acts as a good breast developer and imparts a graceful shape to the breasts of youthful maidens.[27] Somarāja seeds taken in combination with butter and honey cure all forms of leucoderma.[28]

Ghee

Ghee properly cooked with the expressed juice and paste of Guduci, Triphala, Vasaka, Mṛdvika and Vata acts as a good febrifuge.[29]

A medicated Ghee cooked with the paste and decoction of citrakam is appetising and it also cures intestinal glands, oedema, ascites, splenic enlargement, colic and haemorrhoides. The five kinds of salt such as the Sauvarcala, Saindhavam, Viḍanga, Audbhidam and Samudram should be added to the

above medicine.[30]

Pippali taken with treacle and Abhaya fried with Ghee or Trivṛt with acid loṇika may be used with advantage in piles.[31]

Newly made whey (tarkam) is a remedy to piles.[32] A patient suffering from ulcerative endocarditis has to take the Ghee cooked and medicated with the expressed juice of the bark and leaves of Nirgunḍi to get rid of the disease and to acquire godly health.[33] Potions of pañcagavyam are remedial to hysteria and diseases due to the influences of malignant planets. Ghee medicated with the expressed juice of Kūṣmanḍa and Yaṣṭikam has the same efficacy.[34]

Old Ghee medicated with the addition of Vaca, Kuṣṭam, Saṅkhapuṣpi and the expressed juice of Brāhmi cures insanity and the nervous diseases known as Grahāpasmāra.[35]

A medicated ghee cooked with the expressed juice of Aśvagandha and four times as much milk is a tonic, an aphrodisiac, and a remedy to vāta and sterility.[36] Powders of Nīli and Munḍirīka taken with honey and ghee, as well as the decoction of chinna creeper proves curative even in the worst type of Vātaraktam.[37]

A medicated ghee cooked with the expressed juice of kala, guḍuchi and milk cures cutaneous affections, heat in the body and diseases of the deranged wind (vāyu).[38]

A compound consisting of powdered Hāritaki, yava kṣara, pippali and Trivṛt taken with ghee proves curative in Udāvarta (tympanities).[39]

A medicated ghee duly prepared with a paste of Tryuṣaṇam, Triphala, Dhanyu, Viḍaṅga, Chavya and Chitrakam and taken with Alkali, proves curative in the chronic enlargement of the spleen (vātugulma).[40]

A medicated ghee duly cooked with four times as much water twice as much Citrakam and uppalam and cow's urine should be internally administered to an ascites patient.[41]

A medicated ghee cooked with the admixture of the expressed juice of Punarnava should be regarded as a potent cure for oedema and Anasarca.[42]

Plasters of yaṣṭimadhu mixed with warm clarified butter cure all kinds of traumatic ulcers.[43] Plasters of Abhaya fried with melted butter or Triphala pasted with milk or a luke-warm solu-

tion of a paste of Sunṭhi, Nimba leaves and an extremely small quantity of rock salt poured into the eyes constantly proves efficacious in all forms of occular complaints.[44]

A medicated ghee prepared with the admixture of the expressed juice of pañchapallavas, yaṣṭhi, Arka, and Mālati flowers, heated in the Sun removes the bad odours of the Vagina and cures leucorrohoea.[45]

By taking vyoṣa and keśaram with ghee even a sterile woman may enjoy the pleasures of motherhood.[46] A lambative composed of Kuṣṭa, Vach, Abhaya, Brāhmi and Madhukam pasted together and mixed with honey and clarified butter should be given to a babe for the purpose of improving its intellect and complexion and of the duration of its life.[47]

Rubbing of the teeth with ghee cooked in combination with milk and the expressed juice of Karkaṭaka, pala, prevent the gnashing of teeth.[48] By taking kuṣṭam powders each night at bed time in combination with ghee and honey a person is enabled to withstand the ravages of time such as grey hair and shrievelled, wrinkled skin of the body. The wise persons who rub their bodies with a cosmetic compound composed of Atasi, Māṣa and Godhuma pounded together and mixed with ghee, become very handsome and equal cupid.[49]

He who takes Paṭha roots pasted with ghee is relieved of all effects of a poison.[50] Plantain roots cooked in combination with treacle and ghee on a gentle fire act as good vermifuge.[51]

Horse-treatment and ghee : In diseases due to the effect of the deranged and aggravated Vayu, milk and boiled rice should be given to a horse as food and when it is suffering from bilious origin (pittaja) its diet should be a kārṣa weight of meat soup mixed with honey, Mudgasoup and Ghee.[52] In diseases due to the effect of deranged Vāyu and pittam as well as in ulcers, the food of a horse should be given mixed with Gokṣura and Ghee.[53]

Five Palam weight of Guḍūci should be given to horse, each morning in Summer and Autumn through the vehicle of rice-paste, along with Ghee. This food imparts a greater strength and vigour to the horse and acts as a general prophylaxis against disease.[54]

Cows—Urine

In ulcers, cutaneous affections and lameness the food of a horse should be made saturated with a decoction of Triphala. But in impaired digestion and Oedema (dropsical swelling) it should be given saturated with cow's urine.[55]

Urine

Guggulu taken with cow's urine is sure to conquer that form of nervous disease which is known as ūrustambha.[56]

Pills made up of Trivṛt powders of Hāritaki and śyāma soaked with the expressed juice of Snuhi and then dried in the Sun and taken with cow's urine, form the best purgative and cures even the worst diseases of Anāha.[57]

An oedema or Anasarcha patient should take pippali through the vehicle of cow's urine.[58]

A compound consisting of Trivṛt, Nāgara and rock salt pounded together and taken with sugar and honey or that composed of Hārītaki and Viḍanga pounded together and administered through the vehicle of cow's urine acts as a purgative.[59]

An ointment of the head with a medicinal oil cooked with viḍanga, Gandha-pāṣāṇa, and Manaśśila and with the admixture of cow's urine four times to its weight destroys lice and dandruff.[60]

A medicinal oil cooked with its quarter part of cow's urine and with the addition of rock salt, Vach, Hingu, Kuṣṭham, Nāgeśwaram Śatapuṣpa and devadāru poured into the ears cures earache.[61] Pourings of the expressed juice of the Mālati leaves, and cow's urine arrest fetid discharges from the ears.[62]

A plaster composed Kharam rubbed in a Vessel of Indian bell metal pasted with cow's urine cooked with the combination of rock salt and acid whey (the sour buttermilk) prove curative in all forms of Cutaneous-affections.[63]

Virtues of Milk

As a substitute of mother's milk, one can feed children with cow's milk till they subsist upon milk as much as they require.[64]

If a person takes anything that causes burning sensation in the day-time, he has to take milk after his meal.[65]

General Characteristics of Milk

Milk is very delicious, having oil-content in it. It removes the disorders of Vāta and Pitta (wind and bile). It is a purgative, generator of sperm. It is cool and a good nourishment to all beings. It promotes one's longevity and makes one always vigorous. It is as good as a medicine to all mortal bodies.[66]

It is proclaimed by the sages that milk is very useful to the following persons viz., those who are suffering from chronic diseases or mental agony or who are scorched or suffering from epilepsy or reeling of mind or diarrohea or jaundice or heart-diseases, tympanities with suppression of stool and urine or chronic enlargement of the spleen or pains in the urinary bladder and piles or Raktapitta, or dysentery caused by the derangement of wind in the body or the diseases of the ladies in their reproductory organs or at the time of abortion or when one is very much fatigued (exhausted).[67]

Milk is good for all persons, infants as well as old persons, suffering from the troubles of old age, the wounded, the emaciated, the hungry, the weak—in short for all to be nourished.

The milk of a cow or the puddings made of it are the most delicious. The milk cures the defects of humours, it generates some sweat in the body. It is cool and generates milk in ladies. It is fatty and cures the disorders of Vāta and Pitta. It cures the old age troubles of a person keeping him fit and in good health by providing him resistance power against all diseases.[68]

The Milk of Cows Having Particular Colours

The milk of a black cow removes excessive heat in the body and it is unique in its virtues. The milk of a yellow cow removes the disorders of Pitta (bile) and it removes excessive Vāta (wind) in the body. The milk of a white cow removes one's sleṣma (Phlegm) and makes one weighty. The cow of red complexion with variegated spots removes the diseases caused by Vāta. The milk of a cow which has calved recently or without calf spoils

one's health and the hygienic condition of all the three humours Vāta, Pitta and Sleṣma. The milk of a cow which has a full-grown calf, removes the defects of the three humours. It is as good as a tonic for all. The milk of cows, that reside in different places differs in its virtues.[69]

The cows that graze in the marshy lands cannot yield milk, containing more fat than those of the hilly areas.

The virtues of milk according to the feed :

The milk of a cow which is underfed generates phlegm in excess. But it is strength giving and increases one's virility (aphrodisiac). It is good for healthy persons. The milk of cows that subsist on hay, grass or cotton seeds is conducive to patients.[70]

Proper Time to Take Milk

The milk taken in the forenoon is an aphrodisiac and it promotes one's growth; and increases one's digestive power. In the noon, it gives strength, removes phlegm, and bile and is a good digester. It promotes the growth of children, and it is an aphrodisiac even to old people. It is good for health in the night time and it mends many physical deficiencies and it is good for eyes.[71]

One should never leave milk without taking it completely. For this, one should take as much milk as he can drink. If a person takes anything that causes burning sensation, he has to take milk in the night after his meal. Milk is good for all sorts of persons viz., the hungry, the weak or the infant or the old as it generates sufficient vigour to all persons.[72]

The milk of a cow when churned, if taken, is easily digestible, an aphrodisiac, a febrifuge and a curer of the disorders of all the three humours in the body viz., Vāta, Pitta and Sleṣma. The foam formed on the milk also serves the same purpose. Added to it, it is very delicious and strength-giving and an appetiser and an aphrodisiac. It satiates immediately when it is taken and easily digests.[73]

Characteristics of Curd

Curd is warm, an appetiser having oil content. It is weighty and fragrant. When heated, it is sourish. It is an antidote. It generates phlegm. It is a potent curer of pains during the discharge of urine and cold and chronic diseases. It cures dysentery. It is an appetiser and good to tone up any weak person.[74]

The curd of a cow is the best, strength-giving, sweet and delicious, relishing and appetising and pleasing thing. It is the best nourishment also and agreeable to body. It drives away Rheumatism. No doubt of all curds, the curd of a cow is the best.[75]

Proper Time to Take Curd

Curd is not good during night. When it is added with water or ghee, it is good. Though it is added with water or ghee is not good to one suffering from Raktapitta or phlegm or any other disease.[76]

Curd should be taken in the seasons of Hemanta and Śiśira and in the monsoon (Varṣa). It is not commended in the following seasons viz., Vasanta (Spring), Śarat (Autumn) and Grīṣma (Summer).[77]

Properties of Butter

Butter is good for health. It is an aphrodisiac and develops one's complexion. It is appetising. It is an antidote. It cures the defects of Pitta (bile), excessive wind (Vāta), consumption (Kṣaya), piles, cough etc. It is good to children as well as old men. But it is as good as nectar in the case of children.[78]

The butter which is just taken from milk by churning is good for eyes. It also cures Raktapitta. It is an aphrodisiac, strength-giving. It contains oil in large measure. It is sweet, cool and is an antidote.[79]

The fresh butter is very much delicious and a good digester too. It is very sacred, fragrant, a bit sourish because it is taken from butter-milk. The butter which is not fresh, by nature is a bit saltish and pungent and sourish. But it is a curer of piles and cutaneous affections.[80]

Ghee

The ghee extracted from the cow milk goes a long way to help the power of sight. It increases one's digestive capacity and it is an aphrodisiac. It is sweet and cool. It helps to remove the defects of (vāta) wind and heat (pitta) and Kapha (phlegm). It enhances one's intellectual faculties, bodily beauty and lustre. It is believed that it removes one's misery and drives away all sins and keeps one free from evil spirits. It prolongs one's youth and promotes longevity. Hence it is deemed to be a medicine, pure and auspicious and worthy in character. When it is moderately heated, the smell it emits is pleasant and sweet.[81]

The ghee which is preserved for more than one year is known as Purāṇa (old) Ghee. It removes all the defects of three humours and it cures epilepsy, leprosy, insanity and the like. The longer and older ghee is preserved, the greater the virtues it possesses.[82]

Ghee is not commended to the following persons, viz., one suffering from Rājayakṣma, or phelgm or Soma (disease) or smallpox. It is not commended to an intoxicated person or who is suffering from fever or from indigestion. It is not good to very small (tender-aged) children or very old (infirm-wreck) people.[83]

Urine

Manifold are the virtues of Cow urine. Of all urines, cow urine is the best in the hygienic point of view. Indeed it is a panacea.[84]

Virtues of Butter Milk

The butter milk of a cow serves as an antidote. It is easily digestible, fragrant, delicious appetising, strength-giving and a remover of the polluted wind of the body.[85]

Churned and fat-taken butter milk is good for one's health and digestible to all. But the butter milk which is churned but partially fat-removed is not easily digestible as it causes

phlegm. The butter milk which is not churned is thick and strength-giving.[86]

The Merits and Demerits of Butter Milk to Patients

A person who is of the constitution of Vāta if taking the butter milk with the admixture of salt feels pungent (taste). One of heat-constitution if taking the butter milk with sugar feels delicious.[87]

The butter milk to which water is not added, but mixed with Asafoetida (Hinguzira) and salt cures Grahaṇi, piles, dysentery, and diseases due to Vāta (wind). Added to that, it is also very delicious, strength-giving and a curer of the pains in the urinary bladder. Butter milk when it is not heated removes completely one's phlegm or checks it in the neck itself. The heated butter milk is commended to those who suffer from cough and phlegm.[88]

Taboo

Butter milk should not be taken by one who is wounded or weak or is suffering from epilepsy or having reeling sensation or who is feeling thirsty or is struck by Rakta-paittika.[89]

Tribute to Butter Milk

By taking butter milk, one will never get displeasure. The diseases which are once cured by butter milk will never recur. Just as ambrosia is palatable for deities, so is butter milk for human beings.[90]

Milk and its Characteristics and Virtues

Colostrum

A substance like milk loaded with proteins and mineral substance comes out of the mother's teat as the first thing. It is to serve the need of the new born calf.[91] After the cow has calved, within an hour, she should be milked, and the

same thrown away. Then the calf is allowed to suck the mother and drink. For three days the calf should be allowed to draw all it can and the milk left must be drawn out and used for butter and puddings. For 21 days from birth of the calf, the milk should not be given to children. After ten days coffee, tea etc., beverages can be prepared with the milk.[92]

Meconium

Accumulated excreta in the stomach of the calf is discharged by allowing the calf to such Colostrum. It is strength-giving and laxative. Diarrhoea will result if the calf is allowed to suck up more than its need. The cow should be milked and the milk obtained from each teat is ascertained. The requirement of the calf should be first met especially during the first fortnight when mother's milk is the only food.[93]

Final strippings of the milk contain a much larger percentage of fat. The first strippings may contain about 1 per cent and it gradually increases to 8 or 10 per cent in a cow of 4 per cent average fat in the milk. When in towns the cow is milked from house to house, those who get the final strippings of milk get an exceedingly high fat-content.[94]

Milk is white fluid. The colour is the result of the scattering of reflected light by the ultra microscopic particles of fat globules, colloidal, calcium cascinate and calcium phosphate. Carotene present in cow milk modifies the whiteness in creaminess.[95]

For nutritive value of milk, there is no other substitute. It forms an effective substance in the human dietary. Infants and growing children should take cow milk. Milk is designed as a perfect food upto 6 months from birth when no other food is digestible. Milk is iron-deficient. Its use as sole food after 6 months from birth to babies leads to malnutrition.[96] Babies brought upon cow milk with all its calcium and phosphorous content are sure to show better development than those nursed on mother's milk alone. Milk with cereal diet gives satisfactory results in growth. Thus for growth especially of children, milk plays a vital part. Milk tones up the deficiency during the growth period i.e., upto 21 years and later too. Child

mortality, is lessened by taking milk from infancy. Better teeth, greater vitality and better reproductive ability and longevity are the good results of taking milk. There is much to speak of milk in regard to its protective and growth value.[97] However, the milk from a cow, when she is in season or near her time for calving is not good for children. Evening milk is richer in fat.[98]

Mr. God-bole in his 'Milk, the Most Perfect Food' wrote that milk taken in plenty will be conducive to the longevity and contrasts Germany vs. Bulgaria to substantiate his statement. The Bulgarians take a very large quantity of milk, and its products in their daily food. They take flesh diet only on holidays. The ratio of persons having a life of one hundred years or more in Germany and Bulgaria is worked out as 1 : 600 based on population.[99]

Dr. E. V. Mc. Collum cited by Manian gives an account of the virtues of milk in 'The Cattle Wealth of India' :

> 'The people who have achieved
> Who have become large, strong, vigorous people
> Who have reduced their mortality
> Who have the best trades in the world
> Who have an appreciation of art, literature and music
> Who have progress in Science, and every activity of the Human Intellect
> Are the people who have used liberal amounts of milk and its products.'

Literature—ancient and modern alike—is full of praise of milk as the perfect nutrient, the virtues being many and various. The modern scientific literature holds milk as the only food life-giving and life-sustaining qualities.[100]

Milk is unique blending of 101 different substances containing nutritive values of its component parts. In its proteins there are 19 amino acids, in the butter 11 fatty acids, 6 vitamins, 8 enzyme, 25 minerals, 1 sugar, 5 phosphorous compounds, 14 nitrogenous substances—and all these ingredients suspended and dissolved in the form of fluid. It is perhaps due to this mysterious quality of cow milk that from Vedic times cow had

been held in veneration and milk extolled.[101]

Milk—A Perfect Emulsion

Milk is considered a perfect emulsion, a suspension of oil matter in water. This quality of suspension of oil matter in water is of its own. No other emulsion can stand equal to milk in its perfection. Cow milk in India contains 5 per cent of its weight of fat broken into minutest globules and suspended in the medium. It is inseparable even on boiling. Of course, on keeping the milk for a long time, fat tends to float up forming a ceremony layer on the top and this process is hastened by shaking and churning or even by boiling and keeping. This inherent characteristic helps the separation of the cream and butter milk. Thus milk is a proven emulsion—perfect and unrivalled. It is impervious to separation even on heating unlike other emulsions.[102]

As for mineral component, cow milk contains iron to build up the haemoglobin of the blood. Of course the haemoglobin content is not sufficient to cater to the needs of the growing babies or calves. In cow milk, colostrum has a much higher content of iron, 4 parts per million. Davies claims that cow milk ordinarily contains 1·5 to 2·4 parts of iron per million, but others hold different views in regard to its iron content.

A large amount of minerals necessary for tissue formation is found in milk. During infancy, milk is the only source of inorganic (mineral) constituents of the body. It has a good amount of calcium. Green vegetable matter—leguminous plants in main —is rich in calcium assimilable easily. For adults, milk supplements the cheap carbohydrates, which is a superior source of calcium, calcium phosphorous and Vitamin D for bone formation and immunity to rickets. Besides it also supplies iron and copper to ward off anaemia. By an addition of copper a higher level of haemoglobin and rapid recovery from anaemia is possible.[103]

The Globulin (Lactglobulin) of the Blood (Colostrum)

The first colostrum contains 9 times the carotene, eight times

the Vitamin A and two times the Vitamin D of the normal butter-fat. It is rich in caprylic and capric acids. Bacterial agglutinins also pass over from colostrum to the new born. Colostrum rapidly gets mixed with the blood. The anti-bodies and other immunising factors from the mother to the new born is conveyed by the colostrum. Otherwise, pathogenic bacteria invade various organs of the body and blood poisoning would result in the calf. While the foetus was in the placenta, the cow could not pass the anti-bloods to the foetus through the placental barrier. Thus colostrum feeding after the offspring is born is very necessary.[104]

Ghee

Of all the milk products in India, Ghee stands out in importance. It is therefore the most important article of trade. The report on Marketing of Milk is to the effect that Ghee keeps good for long periods even under tropical conditions of storage and ordinary packing. A well-made-ghee remains good for about two years and can be reconditioned by clarification. No other indigenous product keeps so well, and so long; nor can it be reconditioned likewise.[105] Cow ghee gets its yellowishness due to carotene-content. Carotene if converted to Vitamin A makes the colour become fainter. When carotene is less the cow-ghee becomes light-coloured. Vitamin content is not detectable from appearance.[106]

Carotene is the precursor of Vitamin A. It is lacking in buffalo-ghee. For assimilability and carotene-vitamin content, Cow-ghee alone stands for. Cow-butter and Cow-ghee is as good as cod and other fish liver oils in regard to nutritional value.[107] Thus scientific results go to prove that cow-milk contains vitamin. For this green grass feeding is very necessary. Without green grass feed amount of feeding of concentrates, however best they be, becomes useless, to extract more milk. Such milk is vitaminless. Further in due course of time the cow will go down and may not be able to bear a calf, and even if she bears the calf will be blind or shortlived. Therefore to serve the cow and her progeny feeding the cow with green grass is of utmost importance. We can thereby derive full-vitamin flow in the

milk.[108]

Buffalo Butter and Cow-Butter

Buffalo-butter is not as good as cow-butter. Buffalo-butter is very white. It has not the nice flavour of cow's butter. Of course it is good for ghee. Tree-tallow is a stuff used for adulteration of ghee.. Certain oils and fats are also being used for this purpose.[109] To counteract such nefarious anti-social activities indulged in by unscrupulous exploiters, Food Adulteration Act is in force; but the offenders could not be brought down merely by such legislation.

Cow-ghee is superior to buffalo-ghee as a nutrient, because of its fat and Vitamin-A content. Carotene is the precursor of Vitamin-A.[110] Cow-ghee contains ten times the carotene per grain against 1·9 units of the buffalo. Bal & Shrivastava in Nagpur University Journal 1940 No. 6 states that the carotene content of buffalo-butter fat is between 20 and 30 micrograms in 100 grams, that of cow-butter fat is between 200 and 570 micrograms.[111]

Benarjee, Agriculture and Livestock in India, Jan., 1937 holds the view that cow-ghee is superior to buffalo-ghee in regard to the stability of its Vitamin-A towards heat. The little vitamin in buffalo-ghee cannot withstand heat. That is why buffalo-ghee when heated for cooking, suffers worse losing in its Vitamin-A—more than does the cow-ghee. The reason is carotene is a preservative. It prevents destruction and oxidation of ghee by storage.[112] For health reasons, cow-ghee is preferable. At comparatively cheaper expense one can get both ghee and milk from a well-nourished cow. Therefore a co-ordinated effort by the cultivator, breeder and consumer and trader too to popularise cow products would revive the cow-wealth in India as surely as day follows night. Then and then alone, the cow will have claimed its due place in our society with all her good virtues to contribute her share in the plenty and prosperity of the Nation.[113] Without the cow, the cultivator is nowhere, since his ploughing and draught work come to a standstill. He must therefore of necessity be cow-oriented, as otherwise he cannot ge ton. So he must be satisfied with what she gives. That a

good cow is more economical in milk-yield and fat-production is more than made out by modern dairy farms.[114] It can therefore be safely concluded that better-feeding and treatment is not without its adequate dividends. In cow-oriented agricultural India, the cultivator is saved only by the cow—not by the buffalo. He must have the sub-conscious drive from within to save the cow. He must not be carried away by the so-called temporary monetary considerations that one can have from the ghee and other things of a buffalo, at the expense of lasting benefits.[115] Buffalo has no place in India, for what India is. Cow-milk, even at higher cost, is by far better than buffalo-milk as proved by scientists.

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109. Cow-keeping in India, p. 222.

110. Cow-in-India, p. 1097.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 534.
112. *Ibid.*, p. 534.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 535.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 536.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 537.

9

Service and Protection of the Cow

The concept of motherhood of cow has its origin even from pre-Vedic times. The protection of cows finds a place in the Ṛgveda. Indra is frequently referred to as the Protector of Cows of Aṅgīras from Paṇis.[1] It is evident from the exhortations of Ṛgveda that it is incumbent on all human beings to protect the cows from all critical situations. There is none to equal with the Mother in any family. A similar status is given to the cow in our social order. Cow is inter-related to human beings and is the kith and kin of people; alike the people to the cow. Cow is regarded as best of all the quadrupeds, just as the Brahmin is the foremost of all bipeds.

Ṛgvedic people used to evince much interest and care for the well-being of the cows and they used to have plenty of good pasture lands. The cow is addressed by the great sages to feed on grass in all seasons and drink the limpid water.[2] Mitra and Varuṇa are requested to send down the rain to give nourishment to cattle.[3]

The way in which Ṛgvedic sages used to extol the cow bears ample testimony to their love and regard for the cow. Sage Bhauma praised Parjanya for the grant of beautiful lakes for the sake of cows.[4] Vasiṣṭha described Uṣas and stated that Uṣas nourishes cows and for the favour of Uṣas the cows are lowing. He also invoked Uṣas for granting cows to worshippers.[5] Savitṛ stretches his hands consisting of ghee upwards for the

protection of all worlds. He is the overlord of all riches (cows etc.).[6] Hence he is glorified for grant of riches.[6a] Just as for milk the cows are fed by grass. Vasiṣta glorifies Indra, the Lord of Cows, by his chants. All the cows belong to Indra, as he is the Lord and protector of cows.[7] Indra defeated Bhalans, Viṣānus, Anūs etc., and recovered the cows of Tṛtsus. Six thousand and sixty mighty soldiers (Dṛhyu) were massacred by Indra when they attempted to rob away the cows of Indra's devotees.[8] Pūṣan also is the protector of cows. Pūṣan is very much connected with rearing of cows and a friend of Indra.[9] Parjanya impregnates cows.[9a]

Ṛgvedic-Seers prayed that the cows should have many calves and grazy lands to serve as pasture. They wished the cows should not be killed by wild beasts.[10] The cow-keepers satisfied the cows with water, the worshippers gratified Indra with libations.[11] Utmost care and watch over the herd was always their watchword.[12]

In Ṛgvedic times cows were sacrificed to Gods and their flesh was offered to Agni. Later on, eminent Ṛṣīs like Bharadwāja condemned even in Ṛgvedic times the killing of cows, holding that the cow was pronounced to be Aghnyā, that which ought not be killed. The following hymn substantiates the sanctity attached to the Cow, in the Ṛgvedic times.[13]

Propitiate the cows to bring to the owners good fortune and take rest in the cow-pen comfortably. They should yield delicious milk for the offering of libations to propitiate Indra for He aids the Sacrificers by showering more wealth, on them. These are guarded carefully lest a robber should injure them. An Evil-minded foe cannot strive to cause any harm to the cows. The master of cows should have a long life along with them. They should not be carried off in predatory incursions.

Cows are regarded as Bhaga and Indra Himself. They yield milk which is as delicious as Soma juice. The lowing of a cow is considered auspicous. Their glory is hymned in all assemblies. They wished that the cows should not be kept by a master who is sinful or a thief and they should not be injured by the dart of Rudra while they graze or drink limpid waters.

It was the sage Bharadwāja who prayed to Indra to grant him food with the cow as the principal item.[14] He identified the

cow with the Gods, Bhaga and Indra. The phrase 'food with the cow' means Cow's milk and all sorts of milk-products. He was against cow-killing and in unequivocal terms attached a special sanctity to the cow by identifying her with the gods. Inspite of the growing sentiment of sanctity attached to the cow, the sacrifice of the cow at Yajñas continued throughout the Ṛgvedic times. The following hymn of Sabara tragically shows the tender breeding of the cows only to be sacrificed at the altar of Gods.

Sabara invoked the cows to have pleasant breeze and precious nourishment and limpid water and bountifiul pastures. He illustrates that the cows whose bodies are offered to Gods, whose forms are known to Soma, and who supply milk after calving may be led to the cow-pens carefully.[15]

In a touching reference to the cow[16] the following Ṛgvedic hymn bears a double meaning to the word 'Go'. The hymn is figuratively addressed to the cows. The rains being over, the clouds disappear. Sacrifices are offered to make rains. The rains from the clouds bring plenty of corn and wealth. Metaphorically, when the cows become dry, they are sent out to the distant pastures. After they have calved, they return safely like the rains and bring happiness and food to the keepers.

The Vedic Āryans fed the cows with barley[17] and supplied them with pure drinking water poured into wooden cattle troughs.

The sides of the well were made of stones or some hard materials. The well had a stone ring at the top to prevent children and animals from falling into it. The pure drinking water poured into the wooden cattle-troughs was fit even for the use of men.[18] The construction of the cow stall is described in the following verse :[19]

'Construct the cow stall, for that is the drinking place of your leaders, (the Gods) fabricate armours manifold and simple; make cities of iron and impregnable, let not the laddle leak, make it strong' (Wilson).

The many metaphery and imagery crowded into the above hymn amply illustrates the great solicitude taken by the Vedic Āryans. They felt it necessary for the protection of their cattle. The cow-stall is compared to drinking place of Gods. The walls

of the cow stall should be strong as armour for the protection of the animals. It is like an invincible iron citadel. It should be by no means leaky and its roof should be rain-proof.

The divine waters are invoked for the prosperity of cattle.[20] There is a charm against the worms or bots lie in the cows which infest them.[21]

Another hymn illustrates the benediction of the cattle-pen in which the cows are kept during nights. Goddess of Fortune resides in the cattle-pen.

'Follow me, cows, as master of the cattle. Here may this cow-pen make you grow and prosper. Still while we live may we approach you living ever increasing with the growth of riches[22] (Griffith).

There is another hymn for the curing of all diseases of bull, leading to their increase and prosperity.[23]

Service and Protection of the Cow

The following points from ancient Writers serve to inform us as to how the Cow should be served.

Cow-Sheds

The houses where cows are tethered and maintained must be kept in a serene and clean atmosphere and condition. One should never answer calls of nature in a cow-shed.[24] The place where cows stay is the very abode of the Goddess of Fortune. Goddess of Fortune always resides in the cow-shed.[25] So, one must clean always the cattle-sheds and keep it free from dirt. It is considered a meritorious act to construct cow-sheds and donate for the same of cow-protection. It is stated in the Agnipurāṇa that a person by endowing houses, mansions, public halls and cow-sheds becomes sin-free and goes to heaven.[26]

Fumigation of a cow-shed with the vapours of Viṣā Plants tend to neutralise the evil effects of malignant stars thereon, and make the cattle strong in limbs. A fumigation of the cow-shed with the vapours of the Devadāru, Vacha, Māṁsi, Guggulu, Asafoetida and Mustard seeds, mixed together, would act as a

safeguard against the breaking out of those diseases among its inmates, which are usefully ascribed to the evil effects of malignant planets. The bells to be hung round the neck of a cow should be fumigated as well with the vapours of the drugs enumerated above.[26a] A person who lits a light in a temple or in the house of a Brahmin or cow-shed or in a junction would become a king and all deities praise him.[26b]

Water for the Cow

The high reward in the world that is reaped by a person who makes a gift of ten thousand cows is got by that man in whose tank water is held even in autumn.[27] That man saves all his race in whose tank cows quench their thirst and from which righteous men draw water. The merit of the horse sacrifice is also got by the man in whose tank cows quench their thirst.[28] The whole race of a person is rescued from hell and sin in whose well or tank or lake cows and Brahmins and righteous people constantly quench their thirst.[29] That man transcends every kind of calamity from whose well or tank every one draws water without restraint during summer.[30] They who cut the continents of such pieces of water as are used by cattle for quenching thirst have to sink in hell.[31]

Giving Way to Cows

While going along the road one should stand aside always making way to the cows.[32] They, who place obstacles on the way of cows and Brahmins and maidens have to sink in hell.[33] The man who lays out a passage for cattle lives in heaven also.[34]

A-Taboo

One who is in an impure state should not even touch the following things of great energy viz., fire, a cow and a Brahmin.[35]

Feeding of Cows

A person who, with a pure heart, free from anxiety, feeds the cow every day for a month and contents himself with one meal a day throughout such period, advances every day in religious merit.[36] The person who even feeds for a single day receives from the beneficient creatures for his act a fourth part of the merits he may derive by all his good acts in life.[37] That man who before taking his meal gives every day for one year only a handful of grass to a cow belonging to another is regarded as undergoing a vow which grants the fruition of every wish. Such a person is blessed with children and fame and wealth, and prosperity. He is dispelled by all evils and dreams.[38] He who gives morsels of food every day to a cow, is sure to ascend heaven after death. He who provides a cow belonging to even another with morsels of food is vouchsafed a similar reward. The man who does anything for the welfare of the bovine species in general goes to the region of Brahma after death.[39]

Milk

One should not take milk from a cow whose calf is very young moved by the desire of obtaining from her as much milk as possible. Such an act is sinful. Those who drink the milk of cows whose calves are very young will never get children for perpetuating their races. Such men see their children die and their races cease.[40] They who live by selling milk have to sink in hell.[41]

Injury or Violence Done to a Cow

One should never injure cows and Brahmins.[42] If a Brahmin accepts food from one who is guilty of killing a cow or a Brahmin or who defiles his preceptor's wife or from a drunkard, he helps to promote the race of Rākṣasas.[43] Those who kill animals, cause animals to be slain and who violate the beds of their preceptors and those who indulge promiscuously in sexual congress, have to take birth in their next lives as persons destitute of virile power.[44] One should not even think of injuring a cow.

One should in one's conduct imitate the cow and show compassion towards the cow. If such a person gives away a single cow, the merit it grants is equivalent to that of a thousand cows. Under similar circumstances the merit of Kṣatriya is the same as that of a Brahmin and a Vaiśya under similar circumstances obtains the merit of five hundred cows. A śūdra obtains the merit of a hundred and twenty-five cows by doing so. A person who without being checked by the restraints of the śāstras, sells a cow, or kills her or eats the flesh of the cow, or he who for the sake of wealth, allows a person to kill cows—all these—namely he that kills, he that eats, he that permits the slaughter —rot in hell for as many years as there are hairs on the body of the cow so slain.[45] Cow-killing-and-selling are included in the recipe of Upapātakas (minor moral delinquencies).[46]

Expiation for Injury to a Cow

The sin incidental to the killing of a bird or a cow unsuspiciously reposing in a bush or a forest, though killed at the instances and for the benefit of a Brahmin is atoned for by reciting all the mantras contained in the three Vedas with controlled senses or by worshipping Sarasvati and by making monetary gifts to any worthy receiver of public munificence. A cow killer—not by any deliberate motive for the crime, shall practise self-control for a month sharing the same shed with cows and leading them to pasturage and drink by way of expiation the sacred composition, Pañcagavya. All the Upapātakas may be expiated by performing a Cāndrāyaṇa Vrata or by living on milk for a month, or by practising Parakavrata. The Agnipurāṇa amplifies that a man having killed a cow or a Brahmin should quit his life the same day or should commit himself to the flame whereby his sin would be destroyed.[47]

The Infamy of Kicking a Cow

The infamy of a person who lifts up his feet for striking a cow or a highly blessed Brahmin or a blazing fire, spreads throughout the world and touches the confines of heaven itself. His pitṛs become filled with fear. The deities also become highly

dissatisfied on his account. Endued with great energy, they refuse to accept the libations served by him; he has to rot in hell after his death for a hundred lives. He is never rescued at any time. One should therefore never touch a cow with one's feet.[48]

Striking the Cow

One should never strike a cow. It is equal to the sin of a foeticide.[49] One should not cast weapons upon cows and Brahmins.[50]

Cow Keeping

A vaiśya has to earn fame by keeping cattle and employ himself in agriculture.[51] One should not set bullocks to work when they have not attained sufficient age. One who bores the noses of bullocks and other animals for controlling them better while employed in work and one who keep animals always tethered, have to sink in hell.[52] A Brahmin should never use wearied bullocks for draught purposes.[53]

Cow Receiver's Qualifications

Cows should not be given to him in whose house they are likely to suffer from fire or sun. Those cows that have been rescued from distress or have been given by poor house-holders due to insufficient means to feed or cherish them, are for these reasons reckoned as of high value. The receiver should be mild towards cows.[54]

Chanting of Mantras in a Cow-Shed

A person who recites the chant relating to Sāvitri in the midst of cows, sees his cows become fruitful.[55]

Brahmin's Cow

Under all circumstances, should the spoilation of what belongs to a Brahmin be avoided and his spouse kept at a distance. One

should never rob a cow of a Brahmin.[56]

The Vow of Service to the Cow

That man who follows cows every day in the woods himself subsisting all the while on grass and cow dung and leaves of trees, his heart freed from desire of fruit, his sense restrained from every improper object and his mind purified from all desires, that man, freed from all desires, lives happily in the region of Brahma or in other regions of happiness that he wished in the company of the deities.[57]

Stealing of Cows

Stealing of cow is sinful. He who steals a cow has to rot in hell Ambarīṣa.[58] Even the gift of a stolen cow is not a wise thing. The man who having stolen a cow makes a gift of her to a Brahmin enjoys felicity in heaven as the reward of the gift; but he has to suffer misery in hell for the sin of theft, for a long period.[59]

Worship

One should always revere cow and worship them bowing one's head. He who does this, restraining his senses all the while and filled with cheerfulness, succeeds in attaining that facility which is enjoyed by cows.[60] Cows are worshipped by the demigods. Kṛṣṇa Himself worshipped the cows on several occasions, especially on the days of gopāṣṭamī and Govardhana Puja.[61]

Devotion to Cows

One should never disregard cows.[62] That man who is devoted to cows obtains all his wishes. Indeed women who are devoted to cows succeed in obtaining the accomplishment of all wishes. He that desires sons or daughters obtains them. He that desires wealth obtains wealth. He that desires knowledge acquires it and he that desires felicity succeeds in acquiring it. Indeed there is nothing unattainable to one that is devoted to cows.[63]

Beef not to be Eaten

By abstaining from every kind of meat obtained from animals slaughtered for nothing, one becomes an abstainer from meat.[64] Every act of injury to a living creature and every endorsement of such an act by refraining from non-violent effort whenever possible to prevent it, is a breach of ahimsa.[65] Beef-taking is strictly prohibited according to a verse in the Atharvaveda. 'If in his home one cooks the cow—sacrificed or not sacrificed—wronger of Gods and Brahmaṇas; he departs dishonest the world' (Griffith).[66] But in the Garuḍapurāṇa a verse commends the taking of flesh of animals that are sacrificed and used for the propitiation of Pitṛs. The use of any cooked meat on the occasion of Śrāddha ceremony and after dedicating it to one's departed manes is not sinful.[67] But one should never kill any animal transgressing the vedic instructions.[68] The protection of all animals is the duty of every human being; but the protection of cow is imperative. By assisting cows and Brahmins and practising the vow of non-violence, compassion, truthfulness of speech and forgiveness and if need be preserving others by sacrificing their own lives. Persons of mixed castes may achieve success.[69] A Kṣatriya who lays down his life in the battlefield on behalf of cows and Brahmins acquires in Heaven such regions of felicity as are capable of being won by the performance of horse-sacrifice.[70] A king who with his face turned upwards, the foe will cast off his life-breath in the field for the benefit of cows and Brahmins as a result he would be born as a Brahmin endued with knowledge and science purified from all dross and fully conversant with the Vedas.[71] That person who rescues cows and Brahmins from danger in the wilderness becomes himself rescued from every kind of calamity. He attains to whatever end he pleases at the hour of death. Many a region of felicity he covets in his heart . . . becomes attainable to him in consequence of his act. Such a person by the grace of cows receives great honours in every region of felicity.[72] The man who sings any hymn in her praise or rescues her life from any danger ensures the salvation of all souls any way related to him in life.[73]

Agriculture

Agriculture is a meritorious avocation. Even Brahmins may take it up. He has to plough the field for six hours daily with 4 oxen. If he has not four oxen he has to do it at least with 3 oxen. The cow-pen in which the oxen are kept should be provided with dry grass (hay). It should be iron-safe lest a robber or any wild animal should harm the oxen. They should be fed with tender grass sufficiently. In the cow-pen, the dung and urine should be taken away from time to time and should be kept clean. One should never ease oneself in the cow-pen as a cow-pen is the very abode of all deities. A wise man has to guard the cow-pen as his bed. The owner has to check up the conditions of cold and hot atmosphere and see that dust may not enter into it.[74]

One has to look after the cow as his very life in as much as the frame of the cow is an object of reverence. One who touches a sinner or leper or a pariah or beef-eater, a dog or a woman in her courses and a hunter has to perform ablutions to purify himself.[75]

The happiness or sorrow of a cow reflects on the owner. If the oxen are starved the owner's work suffers. Thereby the owner is the ultimate loser. If they are fed well and properly the agricultural work is carried out perfectly by them. So a farmer who takes to cultivation with vigilance should never be involved in any trouble and should become rich. The weak or decrepit should never be yoked as it tantamounts to the killing of cows. The weak ox should never be yoked along with strong one. He who yokes the oxen on the day of fullmoon or new moon or on the day of harvest incurs the sin of a salughter of ten thousand cows. One should never obstruct an ox while grazing or drinking and one should never drive away the oxen of others without any reason. He who offers handful of grass to a cow belonging to others will be redeemed from all his sins and resides in heaven.[76]

Kicking a Cow

A person who kicks either a Brahmin or cow or parents or

teacher has to go to hell Raurava. If he takes birth as a mortal due to any merit he becomes lame, poor and afflicted with sorrow and grief.[77]

Stealing of Cows

A person by stealing a cow or motherless calf has to rot in a well filled with insects for a period of Kalpa.[78]

A person robbing a house of a householder or stealing the cows, goats, sheep etc., will have the face of a Godha (Lizard) and has to take birth in bovine species afflicted with diseases and thrice thereafter as goat, and again as a sickly man and will have to suffer deserted by his family. Thus subjecting himself to many sufferings for an arduous period, he becomes pure.[79]

Killing

A person will be cooked in the dreadful hell known as Raurava along with his ancesters as a punishment if one kills a cow.[80]

One who kills a cow will get Gajadamsa and is branded as grave sinner for three Yugas. He has to take birth as elephant, as horses and as one in the bovine species and as Pariah (Caṇḍāla) in order to become pure.[81]

One obstructing a thirsty cow from taking water and not serving the cows would get the face of a cow. He has to stay in a hell of the shape of a cow's face for a period of the age of Manu. Next even if he takes birth in the mortal world as a Caṇḍāla for seven times he becomes poor in cattle, health and affluence.[82]

He who commits bovicide and Brahminicide etc., has to suffer the hell named Kumbhīpāka for a period of fourteen Manu ages. And again he has to take birth as an eagle and pig and crow and an insect in faeces. After suffering all through these births he would be born as a poor person afflicted with the dreadful diseases like leprosy and consumption and suffers segregated and isolated life from his family and becomes pure.[83]

A person who obstructs a cow from feeding or drinking or one who strikes cows with a staff or proceeds between cows or

Brahmins incurs the sin of cow-slaughter itself. Same is the fate of one who mounts on a bull or one who touches with his leg either fire or kicks cows.[84]

A person who digs the cattle path and sows seeds on the soil of a tank incurs the same sin that is attached to a cow-slaughter. Same is the gravity of sin when one performs expiatory rites pertaining to cow slaughter to alleviate the sin, with adversity either by reason of being a miser or ignoramous.[85]

A person who kills a cow wilfully and wontonly has to roam for one year to holy places to be washed off the sin attached to his act.[86]

He who tills the pastures or cuts the body of a cow or mounts on her or binds has to inhabit in the inexhaustible hell for ever.[87]

One who endows land fit for use as pasture for the free feeding of the cows shall attain heaven and reside therein permanently. A person who cuts a sacred tree or tills a pasture land will rot in hell 'Raurava' along with his twenty-one generations. Therefore the vigilant administrators of the village should keep an eye on such persons indulging in destroying the pastures and punish them.[88]

Those wicked persons who take beef and desire to take what might not be taken would be born as insects and as trees and ants. They are to be treated as demons and have no right in reciting hymns or worshipping deities.[89]

A person who protects a cow when she sticks in a morass or when she is threatened by the fear of wild animals enjoys in heaven the pleasures yielded by the celestial tree.[89a]

By offering grass to a cow a person would be born as a handsome person in his next life with great fortune. A person who attends upon a diseased cow and renders medical aid to her would be born as a healthy person. By rendering medical aid, water, salt, food to a cow when she is distressed, a person will be relieved of his bondages.[90]

By killing a cow a person has to suffer twenty-one kinds of hells. So by all means one should always be bent upon protecting the cows since cow protection is imperative.[91]

A person by selling cows never attains welfare, only by taking the name of the cows a person will be redeemed from all his

sins. The touch of them is itself sacred and sin-cleansing. The gift of kine protects the families of the donor in the same way.[92] In that house where even a single cow is kept there does not exist the impurity of a woman in her courses, the pollution of birth and death, and the defects of soil.[93]

The exhaled air of cows causes much peace in a house. Moving a light around all the limbs of a cow is commendable. The touch of the cows is sin-cleansing to all mortals. Taking the urine, dung, milk, curd, ghee the watėr of Kuśa grasa and fasting for one night purifies even a caṇḍāla.[94]

The one earmarking pastureland or dig ponds for the sake of cows obtains heaven for innumerable years and also acquires the merit equivalent to horse sacrifice. By the construction of cow-sheds one becomes the lord of a city. By offering salt to a cow one obtains great fortune. By warding off the fear of cows, one becomes fearless.[95]

By purchasing a cow from a butcher one acquires the merit of Gomedha. A cowherd by doing so either from a butcher or any other person and by giving protection to the cow goes to heaven. Go Vrata is superior to Rājasūya and Aśvamedha. By its performance one attains the fulfilment of his desires and goes to Brahmaloka after death. Even though a person performs this vrata without offering a cow obtains great merit.[96]

A person while subsisting on the barley left out by the cow for at least three nights or one week is freed from his sins and acquires great merit also. Even the dust raised by the feet of cows removes all sins and one should not feel repugnant from whichever place the dust rises. It is purifying and capable of removing poverty. The house in which cows stay is indeed a sanctuary. The exhaled air of cows acts as a nīrājana and the touch of them is meritorious and removes the evil effects of bad dreams and sins.[97] At the joint place of the neck and head of a cow the holy Ganges stays. Cows are the very concourse of deities and the very sanctuary to holy waters. Even the hair of cows is meritorious and sin-cleansing. The Soma stays in the milk, curd and clarified butter of the cows. In the rocana the Saraswatī resides. One should serve them properly.[98]

One who is devoted to cows obtains meritorious and care-free regions. Hence upright persons should attend upon cows

voluntarily.[99] A person who is not having a cow will never get affluence.[100]

The lord takes human form by his will-power for the protection of cows, sages, deities, Brahmins and vedas.[101]

In olden days the Earth took the form of a cow when she was oppressed by the burden of demons, deities and tyrants and approached Brahma lamenting as an orphan and representing all about her grief. Brahma consoled her along with other deities and Śaṅkara Brahma took her to the abode of Hari, Vaikunṭha. There was Govardhana mountain, the best of all mountains. It was full of celestial trees all around. There were innumerable herds of cows resembling mountains in white. They were adorned with ornaments endued with all dispositions and auspicious forms. Their horns were plated with gold, their necks provided with bells hanging around. They were of the complexions of Pāṭala, red, green, copper, yellow, black, dappled (variegated smoke and deep black.) They yielded large quantity of milk. Their bodies had the marks of the hands of beautiful maidens. Their calves were sporting as deers. Great bulls were moving here and there in the midst of herds of cows. The cowherds were bearing in their hands flutes and were singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. All the deities saluted them and proceeded. There in the luminous disc, there was a thousand petalled lotus. On that there was a 16-petalled lotus, on that there was another lotus of 8 petals. On that Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā were seated on a throne.[102]

Lord Kṛṣṇa said that he would descend on the earth and remove the burden of the earth after taking birth in the family of Yadus.[103]

NEED FOR COW PROTECTION

Gandhi's Views

Cow is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Whereas our mother gives us milk for a couple of years, the cow gives us unbroken record of service lasting unto death and even afterward every part of her body is useful. She gives milk and makes agriculture possible. Thus, the protection of the cow comes to

protection of the whole dumb creation of God—the Gift of Hinduism to the world at large. Hinduism and cow protection are therefore insterlinked and they go hand in hand. Therefore Hindusim flourishes only when Hindus protect the cows.[104]

The obvious fact that Hindus do not favour the slaughter of cattle bears ample testimony to their love and regard for the cow. By protecting the cows, our ancient sages are said to have attained salvation.[105]

Inhuman treatment meted out to the cow and her progeny by a few, like taking even the last drop of milk from her, starving her to emaciation, cruelly beating and overloading the oxen is despicable—rather unbecoming of Hinduism.[106] The present poverty-sticken condition of India, in main, is attributable to our failure to protect the cow.[107]

Cow Slaughter

State-initiative like purchasing cows by out-bidding, running dairies on ideal lines to ensure milk supply at cheap price, running tanneries engaging skilled hands, keeping model cattle-farms to inculcate the art of breeding, disseminating the knowledge of science of cattle to the people through experts and publicity media are some of the remedial measures to counteract the growing cow-slaughter. Mere legislation is not all unless it is backed up by cow-protection consciousness. Already in states like Andhra Pradash etc. Ordinances prohibiting Cow Slaughter and preservation of animal life have been introduded.[108]

To control and regulate the breeding of cattle, the production of pure milk supply and the disposal of dead cattle, the State as well as the people should work together. It is up to us to avoid the reluctant necessity of sending the cows into butcher's hands. For this the care of the cow is very necessary. The spirit of kindliness towards cow alone could put an end to slaughter.[109]

The cow protecting societies should rise to the occasion and focus their attention on feeding, prevention of cruelty, preservation of pasture land, improvement of breed. Model self-supporting dairies should come into being.[110]

It is deplorable in India, the so-called worshippers of cows have degenerated into being satisfied with donating some money to pinjarapoles, without fully recognizing and promoting the value of preservation of cattle. They would do well to impart knowledge of scientific rearing and breeding of cows to the ignoramous lot and dedicate their lives devoutly to the cow worship, if they crave for the improvement of cow-wealth.[111]

The Hindu ideal from yore lay stress on both economic and spiritual aspects. The story of Dilipa and the Divine Cow Surabhi is an abject lesson in regard to the sincere dedication to the cow. When Dilipa was prepared himself to sacrifice his life for the sake of his preceptor's cow, the Divine Cow was propitiated with his self-sacrifice and granted his wish to have progeny. Ours is a cow-centred economy and hence cow slaughter is suicidal to our economic life. Slaughter of cow is nothing short of making the way of life impossible.[112]

The best way of saving good milk-cows from being slaughtered is for people to start farms for keeping dry cows until they calve again. Therefore some large farms should be started for the purpose. It would be paying. The cows that would have run dry, whether in calf or not, will be sent there. Even the proprietors themselves can make outright purchases of such dry cows and maintain them till their calving.[113]

Cows and calves if properly fed and cared for in these institutions, will bring forth appreciable results to the lasting benefit of the Nation and to serve the cow heart and soul in keeping with the letter and spirit of institution's existence. Then there will have much to be said in their favour.[114]

S.C.D. Gupta's Views

Growing of Fodder—A Preliminary Step

It is of utmost importance to grow food for feeding the cows. The cows would give manure, which would increase the productivity of the soil and give better fodder. When we wrench out the traditional use of the ox by replacement of combustion engine and electric motor, they contribute to the development of soil diseases and plant diseases. These machines or tractors

do not void urine and dung and the soil is deprived of the same. Much amount need be invested to reclaim the soil fertility.[115]

The importance of the cow as the mother of the bullock and as the producer of manure should not be lost sight of. The cow serves the dual purpose of 'Cattle-Farming' and 'Dairy-Farming' and supplies natural manure. She is therefore the husbandman's animal. The importance of the cow as a manure-giver is being realised recently by other countries. India is having at its centre the cow. The greater the care for the cow, the greater is the prosperity of the country. The Government-sponsored wide advertisement of the she-buffalo as the milch-animal is a half truth and given due recognition to the importance of the cow and protection of cow-wealth the cow will claim her due place.[116]

The cow in India, the mother of bullock, is indissolubly linked with agriculture. Good agriculture means good cattle-wealth.

Dr. Voeleker finds the Indian plough as an efficient instrument. He opines that deep ploughing as against the scratching by the Indian Plough would spoil the soil by allowing the subsoil water to evaporate, whereas the country plough conserves the moisture in the soil.[117]

To improve the cattle as if by magic better nourishment and fodder should be given. The nutrition of men and of the cows is indissolubly connected. Where the cows are starved the men are also starved.[118]

The abject lesson of Mr. S.C.D. Gupta illustrating how Lakshmi, a wretched cow which was reduced to skin and bone was able to put on flesh on proper feeding within 3 months is worth-noting to bring home the good effect of better feeding. Slaughter is no solution suited to Indian mentality. Since there is no enough fodder, fodder position requires urgent attention in our country.[119]

Cow Serves the Dual Purpose

For improvement in a breed, nutritious and balanced diet for the herd is to be provided. Coaxing the cow to have more milk yield is a good practice. Better rearing of the calf and a healthier calf ensured thereby can be expected only when the

cow gives more milk. Better bulls and bullocks and better cows are the result of better rearing of the calves.[120]

It is sheer irony of fate that India owning the largest percentage of cattle in the world is having for its population the least per capita quantum of 6 oz of milk per day. Still lower is the case in certain other parts.[121]

To compare an unnourished and neglected cow with a better nourished and well-cared-for buffalo in the matter of milk yield is unfair. Scientific breeders claim that the cow is more amenable to improvement than the buffalo. The importance of bestowing care equally for the cow to get equal milk yield should be instilled in the mind of the cultivator. When there is more milk yield, the additional feeding charge does not stand in his way. Besides the cultivator gets the profit from the male calves.[122]

The desire of cattle improvement has its own root in community interest. From the hoary times there has been the practice of dedicating Brahmaṇi bulls at the time of obsequies. Though it was a commendable act of merit in the past, since they bestowed proper care to select the best bull for the propose, nowadays it has become a sheer farce and any wretched bull is preserved into service, for being branded at the time of funeral ceremony of the dead person. Though it was considered a sin to drive away such bulls if they come to any field, nowadays, they are subjected to ghastly cuts inflicted by cruel persons unless the owner takes the vicarious responsibility to keep them away from going to fields in the crop season.[123]

Even today though men are profited by the cow they hardly make any effort to render her more and more useful to them.

Grasses are the primary support of the cow. Grazing on good pastures for the health of the cow and her progeny is very necessary, especially when simple grazing is found inadequate to maintain her. Dry fodder is unnatural. Green grass, leaves or legumes can keep up the health and efficiency of the cow. In the absence of proper feed the cow is put to difficulty. Tender and immature grasses supply proteins, minerals, vitamins etc., and conducive to growth. Frequent prunings of pasture grass to allow it to continue on the growing stage ensure protein-rich grass. This is more so in rainy season.[124]

The cow is amenable to kind treatment. She lacks a good word of sympathy, a caress and pleasant and approving look. Conversely, if you are cross with her, she is also like that with you. We must take full advantage of coaxing, treating kindly to have better response from the cow, and refraining from cruel treatment.[125]

It is noteworthy how like men the cows exhibit reactions. Their feelings get mysteriously refined perhaps due to the close association with mankind.[126]

We get more milk than what nature designated and the cow has admirably answered to the human demand over her natural function. 'Increased milk yield is got by extra feed.' Half of the extra-feeding cost is paid back in the shape of milk. There is of course a constitutional limit in converting fodder into milk. Therefore the feeding limit must be restricted to that extent.[127]

Though a cow on calving is inadequately fed, it will give her yield of milk. If inadequate feeding is continued, the milk-yielding capacity will have adverse affect. The milk-sources will get dried up. Naturally therefore the yield will fall to keep a balance between her feed and yield. Prudence warrants to draw out the best in the cow by giving her a liberal feed till she reaches her maximum yielding capacity. It is clear that under-feeding will never pay.[128]

A dry cow should never be neglected or underfed simply because there is no milk forthcoming from her till she calves. By ignorance and folly if we starve the dry cow, the offspring becomes badly constituted with less prospect of milk-yield. Further the dam will have the impact of underfeeding and cannot therefore remain in milk for such a long period as would have been the case if normally fed. Further calving number become less—few and far between.[129]

Therefore an eye on the economic aspect of feeding properly a dry cow should be kept. The necessity to feed her properly should never be undermined, as the neglect will have pernicious effects on the milk yield, the progeny, the calving gap, the chances of calving etc.[130]

Thus it will be seen the excess of the feed given over maintenance ration, goes to make milk, of course subject to its limit

to the milk-yield capacity of the cow's constitution. Without the satisfaction of her allayed hunger, she feels restless. The craving for food to the fill is apparent in cow and she readily responds to it.[131]

Cruelty

To prove the real worth of the cow start the starving cow to get sufficient and proper food and see the difference it makes in all respects.[132]

Again the profit-motive in the calf-management allows the minimum quantity of milk just to keep the calf alive. This is more so in towns where the maintenance charges are comparatively higher. The calf-mortality, stunted growth of calves are only attributable to this sort of limited scope of sucking milk given to the calves.[133]

It is therefore very necessary that at least for a period of 6 months, the calf, being unable to digest anything but milk, must be allowed to suck to the required measure. Until the stomach is formed properly for digestion of grass it is unjust to extract milk from the cow leaving little or nothing to her calf.[134]

In human practice of phooka, blowing air into the uterus of cow to get more milk is harmful. The cow when once subjected to it never calves again.[135]

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10

Stories Connected with the Cow

Soma Cow[1]

Soma found a thousand cows and Indra too discovered the same. Yama approaching them wanted a share and picked out the strongest one among the herd whereupon they said that since that cow was strong she should be shared among them. Having put the cow into the waters, at their bid, the cow came out in reddish brown colour of one year age together with three hundred and thirty-three. Hence the necessity for one to go in for the Soma cow (reddish-brown) of one year growth, since the said purchase is tantamount to purchasing with her three hundred and thirty-three and sacrifices with Soma for which he has paid a dear price.

When the cow was put into waters and asked to come out for Indra, she came out in the form of a red-draught coloured animal of four years old with good characteristics capable of destroying foes together with three hundred and thirty-three. Hence the purchase of red-draught animal of good characteristics with good strength to destroy the foes is considered auspicious and it is equally good as three hundred and thirty-three others.

Then again when the cow was put into waters and asked to come out for the sake of Yama, she came out as an aged, stupid, utterly bad animal together with three hundred and thirty-three, and hence the convention to go in for purchase of the aged,

stupid, worst one for funeral purpose. Speech is the thousandth and hence a boon must be given. As the cow is a boon, one must not accept a boon. The cow should be spotted on either side. She must be spotted one side only. The cow meant for a boon should be fair and perfect in shape as she herself is a boon conducive to prosperity. Leading her round to the North of the Agnīdh's place, one makes her smell the wooden tub near the Āhavanīya Fire, with a chant.

He, who knows this, becomes rich in offspring in cattle as well as in wealth. Then he should offer the cow standing in front of her i.e., while the cow stands facing him. The thousand is divided into three parts, at three-night festival. He offers to her forms and unites her with her forms. Rising up, he mutters in her ear, addressing her with her names, Ida, Ranti, Aditi, Sarasvati, Priyā, Preyasi, Mahi, Viśṛti, Aghnyā and requests her to proclaim him among the gods as a doer of good deeds. She certainly informs the gods about him and then the Gods will know him.

Hariscandra[2]

King Hariścandra was blessed with a son on the king's taking a vow to offer his first born son in sacrifice to gratify Varuṇa but after the son was born, the attachment was too much as to make the king gain time from time to time. Rohita, the king's son came of an age to think independently, the king, unable to withstand the pressure brought to bear on him by Varuṇa, asked Rohita to be the victim of the sacrifice but Rohita, for fear of life, hid himself for 6 years in the woods. Since the king incurred displeasure of Varuṇa he became a target to an incorrigible disease. On knowing his father's affliction, Rohita made up his mind to stand as victim to enable his father to redeem his vow.

On his way back, he met a Brahmin Ajīgarta afflicted with stark poverty. Rohita offered one hundred cows to spare one of the three sons of Ajīgarta and so the poor Brahmin accepted the offer and sold his second son, Sunaḥśepa. As a substitute offer for his son when the king wanted to offer Sunaḥśepa, Varuṇa accepted it, and so arrangements were in train. As none came forward to bind the victim to the sacrificial post (Yūpa),

Ajīgarta did that inhuman act for another hundred cows. And again when none came forward to decapitate the poor victim, Ajīgarta accepted that job for another hundred cows and when he was about to strike the fatal blow, Sunaḥśepa invoked in despair divine help and prayed to Prajāpatī for his release and on the direction of Prajāpati he prayed to Agni and likewise to Savitṛ, Varuṇa, Agni, Viśvadevas Indra, Aśvins, Uṣas, as a result of which he freed from the binding straps and sacrificial post and the king's disease also disappeared in no time.

Yajnavalkya[3]

Even philosophers are no exception to be carried away by profit-motive is known to King Janaka and to prove the same, he invited all the eminent scholars of the day to his Court on a fine day and held out a reward of one thousand heavy cows with gold coins tied between their horns one who claimed to have known Brahman.

A realist receives first and gives afterwards, while an idealist gives first and receives afterwards.

There was a spell of silence as every body in the assemblage felt it very delicate to claim himself as the knower of Brahm. n in the midst of the many wise men.

But, Yajñavalkya dared to claim the reward by bidding his disciple of Samaveda to drive the cows, gold and all to his house. By his act of course Yajñavalkya exhibited a commendable act but his enemies had the eyesore for his intellectual arrogance. However, single-handedly Yajñavalkya won the mover with his shrewd intellect in the duel.

On another occasion Yajñavalkya,[3a] the philosopher once visited the King Janaka of Mithila. When Janaka jocularly put it to him whether his visit was meant for disputation on Brahman or for more cows, Yajñavalkya replied that he came there for both.

King Janaka was after the positive from the negative side of the aspect that Brahman is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss Absolute. Yajañavalkya is an adept to prove the known to the unknown, and requested the king to tell him all about what he was taught by his preceptors in regard to the knowledge of the

Absolute. The king replied that Jitwa son of Śilina instructed him that speech is Brahman. The philosopher said that his knowledge of Brahman was incomplete in as much as he lacked knowledge of the abode of speech and how he was supported during his creation, preservation and dissolution. He explained to the king that the abode of speech is intelligence and hence Brahman is known as Prajña; that Ākasa is the beginning and end (Alpha and Omega) and all things have their basis and support in Ākāśa (space).

Pleased with his explanation, the King offered him a thousand cows along with bulls as big as elephants; but Yajñavalkya declined to accept the reward as he felt it improper to accept the same without enlightening the seeker after truth.

Satyakama—the Brahmajnani[4]

Satyakāma, the son of Jabāla, having obtained permission of his mother, approached the hermitage of Gautama. He saw the cows returning to the Āśrama after the day's grazing and a few Brahmacarins gathering twigs for the morning oblations to Agni. Satyakāma, as a worthy seeker after Brahmajñāna approached the preceptor with twigs in hand and paid his obeisance to the preceptor Gautama in the evening by placing the twigs at his feet and sought for initiation into Brahmacarya a preliminary step to Brahmajñāna. Impressed with the eager aspirant after spiritual learning, Gautama enquired of his Gotram, whereupon Satyakāma told him that he was the son of Jabāli and his name was Satyakāma. Pleased with the calmness and purity, beauty and sincerity of the boy, the preceptor promised to initiate him into Brahmacarya the next day.

The next day after initiating him into Brahmacarya, the preceptor entrusted Satyakāma with the charge of four hundred cows with instruction to return to his hermitage after they had multiplied into a thousand. Satyakāma gladly accepted the charge, went into a remote part of the forest where there was the availability of abundant pasture and fresh water. The place was ideal for meditation also.

In ancient Āryan economy cow used to enjoy a prominent place. Gotra is the name for their social organisation and Gopa

is the name of the head of the State.

Pinning faith unto his preceptor, Satyakāma began practising austerity and prayer, observing the daily worship of Agni. The cows began to thrive well and gradually outnumber themselves under his personal care and protection. Gradually Satyakāma took to prayerful meditation in the solitude. The sweeping winds on the mountains and the fire at the sacrificial altar became his daily friends.

One day, he heard the call of the God of the Wind through the biggest bull that since they had become thousand strong they might be led to their master and on verification of the same, he found the cattle numbering a thousand.

Vāyu, pleased with his devoted service to Guru and severe austerity offered in the preliminary stage to initiate him into the knowledge of Brahman which forms the first quarter of knowledge of Brahman telling that all the four cardinal points (North, East, West and South) are all permeated by Brahman and to become illumined in life and to attain the shining regions after death he should meditate on Brahman as the luminous consciousness.

The next day, Satyakāma after performing his daily round of duties, started back to the hermitage. There was great transformation in his outlook. The natural sceneries and phenomena seemed to radiate a divine light to make him feel happy and exhilarated. At nightfall he arranged the cows in rows, and sat meditating when Agni initiated him into the second quarter of Brahmajñāna telling him that Earth and Heaven and the intermediary space in between and below them also form another aspect of Brahman and advised him to meditate on Brahman, the transcendent and the infinite. Satyakāma felt as though beamed with the glow of Brahman and experienced the vastness everywhere.

The next day, he started his journey and at night fall just by the time he sat for meditation a White Swan (Āditya in disguise) came flying past him and told that the light of Brahman is shining as Agni on Earth, as the Sun and the Moon in Heaven, as lightning in the intermediate and whatever great and glorious shines only by the presence of Brahman, they all being an integrated whole of Brahman and advised him to meditate on

Brahman as Jyotiṣmān.

The next day, when Satyakāma at night fall was about to meditate, Madgu, a bird, telling that it was Prāṇa (vital breath) said that the ultimate aspect of Brahman is in the realisation of the manifestation of Brahman everywhere and advised him to realise Brahman in himself; as otherwise he remained stranger to his own self and his knowledge of Brahman would remain incomplete.

Thus Satyakāma, who went out to tend cows, became enriched with the knowledge of Brahman quarter by quarter under the instructions of the four elemental forces and became the conqueror of the Kingdom of Knowledge and he was thrilling with the peace of Brahman passing into the very core of his being.

Gautama, on seeing Satyakāma resplendent, when he came back to render the charge of a thousand heavy well-fed cows, was glad to hear of his report and blessed him well.

Cow-Nandini—Vasistha and Viswamitra[5]

Once there was a King named Viśwāmitra. One day he went on hunting and was tired very much. At last he reached the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha. The latter received him affectionately. Viśwāmitra was then very much hungry and thirsty. Vasiṣṭha had a cow by name Nandini that yielded all wishes asked for. She used to fulfil all the desires of Vasiṣṭha. Owing to the efficacy of Nandinī, Vasiṣṭha could feed the king and all his retinue with sweetmeats and other relishing puddings. After seeing the greatness of the cow, Viśwāmitra requested the sage for parting the cow to him in return for innumerable elephants and horses. The sage however did not agree to offer the cow merely because of his request or his luring bargain by way of gifts or by his threats. Then the King grew wild and snatched the cow, whereupon the cow enquired the sage whether she is offered to the king. Vasiṣṭha told the cow that he did not give her to the king but the king himself was taking her by force. Thereupon Nandinī in rage yawned towards the king's army whereupon a whirl of smoke and flames and ferocious innumerable warriors emerged all round. The warriors were in less a measure ferocious as the very messengers of Yama, the God of

death, equipped with several kinds of deadly weapons. On the cow's behest the warriors began to shatter away the army of the king for ten nights. At last, king Viśwāmitra having witnessed the mite of Brahmin Vasiṣṭha resolved to obtain the status of a Brahmin after performing severe penance hard to perform even by the gods.

This is the story relating to King Viśwāmitra becoming a sage on perceiving the glory of Nandinī.

Surabhi and Indra[6]

When Dhṛtarāṣṭra put it to Vyāsa that it was by force of ill-fate he had to willy-nilly consent to the game at dice, being unable to cast off his senseless son, Duryodhana, Vyāsa appeased the king saying that a son was the best of all things one could have, inasmuch as there is nothing emulating him. Illustrating the episode how Indra could realise from the tears of Surabhi that a son surpassed everything else, he narrated the story as follows :

Surabhi, the mother of cows was once weeping in the celestial regions. When Indra came to know of it, he enquiringly asked her the cause of her tears as everything was going on well with the celestials. Surabhi told him that her son, a weak bullock, was plodding on pitiously while being belaboured by his cruel husbandman with wooden stick, while being yoked with a stronger bullock as his pair. She told him that her weak son was falling often upon the ground and was on the verge of death and moved with compunction she was sobbing, for the weak son almost reduced to a mass of veins and arteries unable even to bear the yoke. Thereupon, Śakra enquiringly put it to her why when so many others of her sons were daily being oppressed, she should feel only for this singular son. Surabhi replied that although her love towards all her sons is equal in measure, her compassion would be greater on the weak and innocent ones.

Then Indra could realise that the motherly attachment towards the weak and innocent offsprings would be greater and created a sudden downpour causing obstruction to the husbandman's work.

Ordeal of Upamanyu and Veda[7]

Upamanyu, a disciple of Dhaumya, son of Ayoda, was obediently serving his teacher, tending his cows with implicit faith and regard. Being fatty, he was once questioned by his teacher as to how he supported himself whereupon Upamanyu represented that he survived by abegging. The teacher wanted him not to partake of alms without offering them to him. Accordingly Upamanyu began carrying out his order and tend the cattle during daytime. As the teacher saw him putting up more weight, inquisitively he enquired of him as to how he was supporting himself to which Upamanyu replied that after offering the first collections of the alms to him, he was going again abegging for himself. The teacher took him to task for his improper conduct towards him as he was by his going for second time abegging causing obstruction to the livelihood of other beggars. The boy agreed not to beg for alms for the second time after offering all that he could get by way of alms to his teacher. Yet he was still fat and when questioned by his teacher he told him that he survived on the milk of those cows. He was chided for drinking the milk of the cows without his teacher's permission. Surprisingly enough he was found all the more fatty and when questioned he represented to his teacher meekly that he was drinking the foam which the calves emit after drinking from the udders of their mothers. The teacher then said that by doing so he was causing obstruction to the livelihood of the calves and wanted him to stop doing so. Thus Upamanyu was tabooed from taking even the foam and one day afflicted with hunger in a forest he ate the leaves of the sun-plant, which were caustic, bitter, pungent and injurious to eye sight. As a result he became blind. While groping his way he fell into a well. After sunset finding that Upamanyu had not turned up, the teacher thought that Upamanyu was angry for his command prohibiting him from taking anything, and set about searching for the boy calling aloud his name whereupon from the well the boy narrated what happened to him. On the teacher's bid Upamanyu began to praise the Aśvins by words in the form of verses in appealing tone beseeching their refuge. Pleased by his prayerful entreaties, the Aśvins came before him and gave a cake to be eaten by him.

But Upamanyu, true to his word, wanted that his teacher should partake of that cake. Thereupon the Aśvins told him that his teacher when formerly offered a cake, consumed it without offering the same to his teacher and he might also do alike his teacher but Upamanyu was adamant and true to his word. The Aśvins were highly impressed with his devotion to the teacher and blessed him with golden teeth and eye-sight and good fortune. When Upamanyu reported what transpired between him and Aśvins, the teacher in affectionate terms blessed him with all good fortunes promised by the Aśvins and said all the Vedas and all the Dharma-śāstras would manifest themselves to him.

Another disciple of Dhaumya by name Veda was required by his teacher to serve him staying in his house to have fortune. He was put to bullwark; yet he put up with the troubles caused to him by cold, heat, hunger and thirst with implicit faith, awe and reverence to his teacher. Pleased with his abiding faith and devotion towards him the teacher blessed him well and Veda attained fortune and knowledge of everything.

Nandini and Dyau[8]

Surabhi, the daughter of Dakṣa, for the benefit and well-being of the world, brought forth a daughter (Nandinī) in the form of a cow by her connection with Kaśyapa. Nandinī, the foremost of all kine, was the Cow of Plenty capable of granting every desire. The virtuous Āpava son of Varuṇa obtained Nandinī for his sacrificial rites and therefore Nandinī became the object of adoration and a cynosure to all the sages. She used to have full sway in the forest without any fear, let or hindrance.

One day, the Vasus with their spouses with Pṛthu at their head happened to roam about those woods prized by the gods and celestial Ṛṣis. The slenderwaisted wife of one of the Vasus by chance had an eye on the Cow of Plenty and was enamoured of her, possessed as Nandinī was with all accomplishments, large eyes, full milky udders, fine tail, beautiful hoofs and allied other omenous significance of a virturous cow and she drew the attention of her husband towards the cow and entreated her husband (Dyau) to get the cow with her calf as present to her efrind, the beautiful young Jitavati, daughter of the royal sage

Uśīnara, endued with intelligence and devoted to truth. Dyau then told that Nandinī belonged to the great sage Āpava and one could remain for thousands of years together in unchanged youth by taking her milk. Hearing this her temptation was irresistible and she began prevailing upon her husband to bring the cow and her calf for her friend to remain immune to disease and decrepitude. So, Dyau thus abetted by his lotus-eyed wife, in a blind obsession to satiate her wish, forgetting for a while the high ascetic merits of the Ṛṣi acted upon her bid and stole the cow and calf.

In the evening the sage Āpava returned to his asylum with the fruits he had gathered, found the cow and calf missing and he searched in vain for them. Thereupon with his mystic television he could get at what happened and in his rage he cursed the Vasus to be born on earth. When Vasus entreated the sage for pardon and mitigation of the gravity of the curse, the sage said that Dyau, the one who stole the cow and calf would be virtuous and conversant with scriptures, obedient to his father, but would abstain from the pleasure of female companionship and remain issueless.

The Story of King Nṛga[9]

Nṛga, the charitably-disposed king was noted for his countless gifts of select cows with gold horns, silver hoofs accompanied by their respective calves, having procured them piously. The cows were of high milk-yielding type and endowed with all the virtues and characteristics as laid down in Vedas. He also used to distribute riches in other forms.

As ill-luck would have it, unnoticed by any, a cow belonging to a certain Brahmin joined the fold of the king's kine and in good faith and with pious motive the king gifted the said cow to another Brahmin. While the cow was being taken away, the owner intercepted the Brahmin and enquired as to how he came into possession of the cow. On being told that the cow was gifted to him by the king Nṛga, both of them came to the king. The owner of the cow accused the king as a thief. When the king could realise his mistake and as virtue was at stake, to make adequate amends, he offered both the Brahmins a lakh of

excellent cows if the cow is given to him imploring that the cow joined his herd unawares and he might be saved from impiety. But both the Brahmins were uncompromising and adamant and wanted only that cow which was gifted by the king, and they therefore left the palace dissatisfied.

On death, the emissaries of Yama took the king to the abode of Yama. When Yama put it to the king whether he wanted to suffer his sin first or enjoy the fruits of his virtues first, the king preferred to the former and the king was transformed into a lizard instantaneously. When Lord appeared before the lizard, it sought mercy and redemption by permitting it to the region of the celestials promising pinning faith unto Him, and circumambulating Sri Kṛṣṇa and touching his Lotus-Feet with its head. The Merciful Lover of Bhaktas was moved to pity and he permitted Nṛga to ascend the car bound to celestial region.

It is sheer irony of fate that king Nṛga had to suffer hell despite his charitable-disposition and pious obligations. The act of giving, the giver and the receiver as a last vestige giving away a worthless cow is not pious. Alike unless the cow is given with pious motives by a real owner, however best the cow be, the gift is not worthy of its name. And again, if the receiver of gift is not a worthy person to take the gift, and if he is profit--motivated and sells the cow after gift without enjoying the milk, then too the gift becomes useless. With the hard-earned money a worthy cow and a calf must be purchased to be gifted to a pious Brahmin with good intentions that the receiver should enjoy the benefit of the cow and alike the receiver must be worthy of the confidence reposed on him by the giver. Then the gift is perfect and fruitbearing. It is desirable therefore to purchase the gift-cow or whatever thing it be from bonafide and reliable source. .

The Glory of the Dung of Kine[10]

Once, the Goddess of Riches (Śrī) entered a herd of kine assuming a beautiful form. The kine, struck by her beautiful air, enquired of her name and whereabouts. Introducing herself as Goddess Śrī she said that she forsook the Daityas and took into her fold the Deities and sages, and she was the very cause

for their sportive joy, that she exists in Religion, Wealth, Pleasure, Happiness and Energy and wanted to endue the kine with Śrī. But the kine told her that she being fickle-minded and restless, they did not require her and that they were satisfied with the possession of their good forms they had. Thereupon Goddess Śrī told them that when she was difficult to be attained by many, it was not proper on the part of the kine to disown her when she herself unsolicitedly wished them to be endued with her. She further said that one meets with disregard when one comes to another unasked; whereas the Dānavas, the Gandharvas, the Piśacas, the Uragas, the Rākshsas and human beings undergo the severest type of austerities to solicit her favour and wanted them to own her, without being disregarded and discarded; but the kine in a voice told that since Śrī is very restless, they did not want her.

Since the kine's disregard would be a stigma for Śrī, she promised her readiness to grant protection to those who sought protection from the kine that she was spotless and she would remain devoted to the kine, accepting any repulsive part of their bodies—whether it be their rectum or anything worse, inasmuch as the kine are regarded as sinless beings—sanctifying and blessed. Śrī therefore requested the kine to show her a part of their bodies where she shall take up her abode. Then the kine wanted Śrī to reside in their urine and dung both being sacred and accordingly she makes her abode in them.

The Calf of Jamadagni's Sacrificial Cow[11]

Once Kārtavīryārjuna gave alms to the God of fire being solicited by him. With the assistance of the king, the deity burnt many villages and towns and kingdoms, hamlets of cowherds etc., and even great mountains and forests, including uninhabited but delightful hermitage of the high souled Āpava. Āpava seeing his hermitage gutted down by the powerful monarch cursed him that his thousand arms would be lopped off by Paraśurāma.

In course of time the sons of Kārtavīryārjuna who in consequence of the curse became very haughty and cruel led to his death. The princes once seized the calf of Jamadagni's Homa

cow, without the knowledge of Kārtavīryārjuna. For this reason a dispute was made between the high-souled Jamadagni and the king. The puissant Rāma the son of Jamadagni enraged with wrath lopped off the arms of Arjuna and brought back his father's calf. Then the foolish sons of Arjuna went to the retreat of Jamadagni and beheaded the sage with the points of their lances in the absence of Paraśurāma who went out for fetching sacred fuel and grass. On return at the sight of the cruel murder of his father, Paraśurāma was inflamed with wrath and took a vow to take vengeance and to free the earth off the Kṣatriya race.

Thus Paraśurama was forced to have vendatta with the Kṣatriya race as a whole.

Nadijangha's Revival by the Foam of Surabhi's Milk[12]

Gautama, a Brahmin by birth, began leading a wretched life casting off all his Brahminical virtues and rites, taken to hunting to make his living and he also lived with a Śūdra woman.

Gradually he developed cupidity and associated himself with some merchants and set out on a voyage. Once an elephant ran amuck killing all persons coming his way, and some of the associates of Gautama became prey to the beast. Gautama, however, fled in fear of life and reached a banian tree and thought of staying there for the night.

On the tree there lived a crane Nāḍījaṅgha popularly called Rājadhrama (the son of Kaśyapa) and a friend of Brahma. Nāḍījaṅgha sent the Brahmin to his friend Virūpākṣa, the king of Demons. Virūpākṣa scented that the Brahmin was not a virtuous but wicked one. However, to please his friend, he bestowed upon the Brahmin gold, gems, pearls, etc., on the day of full moon in the month of Kārteeka.

Gautama on his way back informed Nāḍījaṅgha of how he was received by his friend Virūpākṣa and pleased with the report, Nāḍījaṅgha received him hospitably once again and Gautama remained a guest for the night.

Gautama, obsessed by his ungratefulness wanted to kill Nādījaṅgha and make a feast of him. Accordingly, he killed Nādījaṅgha with a blazing stick and fried the flesh and took

road with the flesh and wealth.

Two days elapsed and Virūpākṣa sent his son and men to enquire after his friend's welfare. When his son approached the Banian tree, to his dismay he found instead of Nādījaṅgha a heap of bones and other remnants. So he sent out his men to catch hold of Gautama, the ungrateful wretch and present him before Virūpākṣa. Accordingly when his men brought Gautama, Virūpākṣa did not even so much as see the face of the sinner-Brahmin, an ungrateful wretch, and wanted his men to do away with him and enjoy his flesh to their heart's content. But the demons were loathe to take his flesh, sinner as the Brahmin was. The King then ordered his servants to chop off to pieces the Brahmin and deliver his flesh to some robbers. Not even a robber, or an animal or a bird relished to feast on his meat.

The grief stricken Virūpākṣa arranged for the cremation of the dead body of his friend Nādījaṅgha and the Fire consumed it and reduced the same to ashes. Suddenly the celestial Surabhi (the mother of bovine species) the daughter of Dakṣa, hovered over the pyre discharged from her mouth some foamy milk on the ashes of Nādījaṅgha and lo ! Nādījaṅgha walked before Virūpākṣa in flesh and blood as a resurrected being to the utter pleasing surprise of Nādījaṅgha.

Cow's Face Inauspicious[13]

Once Iśwara in the guise of a monk went for alms into the hermitage of Dāru-vana. Surprised at his charming looks all the wives of the sages gave him alms and enquired about him. Then he replied that he was Īśwara and Sacred Saṭī was his dear wife. When he was about to return to Kailāsa, the wives of the sages also followed him with delight.

The sages on their return to the hermitage finding the absence of their wives cursed Īśwara that he will become a eunuch. And instantaneously the phallus of Īśwara fell down and assumed abnormal size, piercing into the sky. Then the deities asked Viṣṇu and Brahma whether they were able to find out the mūla (origin) and mastakam (top) of the Liṅga (phallus). Brahma went on searching for the top of the liṅga while Viṣṇu

the root.

Brahma could not find the top of the liṅga and was vexed. However, he was not in a position to represent the same lest he should become a prey to the degradation in the eyes of deities. So he asked Surabhi the mother of bovine species who came that way to bear witness. Then Surabhi along with Ketaki figured as false witness to corroborate Brahma's statement as true.

Then they heard a voice from the sky pronouncing all that was uttered by Surabhi and Ketaki as false. Brahma could not see the top. Then all the deities along with Viṣṇu and Indra grew angry and cursed Surabhi for having uttered a lie with her mouth. Her face became sinful. The fragrant Ketaki also was unfit for the worship of Śiva.

The Story of Kartaviryarjuna and Jamadagni[14]

Jamadagni, the son of Ṛcika, had four sons, the youngest being Paraśurāma. They lived in a great forest. Once Saharārjuna, the powerful king of Haihaya dynasty came ahunting in the said forest, he came by the hermitage of Jamadagni engaged in worship of god. The king was received with warm welcome and royal homage. The king took some water and was taking leave of the sage, when the sage requested the king to take food at his hermitage before he returned to his palace, as a visitor to his hermitage during prayer hour should be entertained. When the king expressed that it would not be proper for him alone to dine leaving his hundreds of thousands of retinue, Jamadagni smiled at it telling that the cow he owns is capable of serving any desire. Curiously enough, the king consented to stay in the hermitage. When Jamadagni requested the Cow Nandinī to provide delicious food for the king and his retinue, there came out cooked and even-fresh delicious food to the heart's content of all—edibles, sweetmeats and what not, and they all ate to their fill the relishing food of the six flavours and were immensely pleased. After taking food, when the king wanted the sage to give the cow to him, as such a desire-yielding one should not be in tbe forest, Jamadagni replied that the sacrificial cow was his very life and should not therefore be offered to anybouy and

represented that it was not proper on the part of the king to ask for her. When the king enticed the sage with an offer of one lakh cows and so much money as the sage wanted, Jamadagni said that even a common cow should not be sold—not to speak of the sacrificial one endued with powers to grant the desires, and the sin of a Brahmin by selling a cow would be equal to that of selling his own mother, for which there is no expiation at all. The king thereupon began threatening the sage with forceful taking away of the cow and the furious sage while just calling for 'Weapon' was brutally killed by the king's servants with their whetted weapons. As the sons of the sage were not in hermitage having gone for collecting fruits and roots, Reṇuka the spouse mourned over the death of her husband and the soldiers hurt her too, though left her with life, before they dragged the cow to the City Mahiṣmatī. When the cow seeing the slaughter of the sage and other cruel acts of the king lowed on her way to the city, there came up hundreds of thousands of cruel savages looking like the ambassadors of the God of Death and at the behest of the cow, they began smashing the army of the king outrageously and unable to withstand the force of the cow the soldiers of the king were afraid. The Ministers of the king, knowing that the king brought the cow killing the sage—a Brahmin and that the glorious cow could not be led by force, she being the form of creative energy, advised the king to leave off the cow and resort to his palace before the arrival of Paraśurāma. Afraid of the consequences, the king fled to his capital leaving the cow and the dead army.

Paraśurāma in the meanwhile reached the hermitage with his brothers and on seeing the dead army, the shattered hermitage and the worn out cow, he asked the sages the cause for their distress. On being told of what transpired; Paraśurāma calculated the strokes hit by the army on his mother's body and vowed to free the earth of Kṣatriyas since his father was killed by a king without any guilt committed by his father and twenty-one strokes were caused on his mother's body. Paraśurāma at last cut the thousand hands and the head of the king with his axe. Twenty one times he made the entire earth freed from kings and gratified his forefathers offering blood libations.

The Story of Nandini Cow and the Tiger[15]

The story as described in the Skāndapurāṇa-Nāgarkaṇḍa gces as follows :

King Kalaśa belonging to the Yadu race performed many sacrifices and made many gifts to the Brahmins and always strived for the well-being of his subject. One day Sage Dūrvāsa after observing the vow of Cāturmāsya came to the palace of Kalaśa to have his meal along with his disciples. When the sage and his disciples were served with meat and other delicious food, incited by hunger all of them quickly finished their meals. After the sage finished his meal, he realised that he had taken meat and grew angry with the king and cursed the king to become a terrific carnivorous tiger. When the king craved for mercy and pardon whereupon the sage said that the king would he relieved of the bane when a cow Nandinī would show him a śivaliṅga adored previously by Bāṇa. The king immediately turned to be a terrific tiger and began pouncing upon all the animals that passed his way and killed them and ultimately entered into a big forest, and made the same his permanent abode, killing the animals that repaired near him.

In the nearby hamlet the tiger used to roam about. Daily some head of cattle were coming alone with the herdsmen and herdswomen and there was a milch cow Nandinī with fleshy udders and expanded thighs and the complexion of a swan with rich milk strain. She met with one liṅga (symbol) of Śiva in a bower which was installed there by Lord Śiva Himself. It had the effulgence of twelve suns put together and Nandinī used to consecrate the Liṅga with her udders unnoticed by others.

Nandinī came to the eye of the tiger one day. While she was felling for her young one still in milk tethered at the cattle house, the tiger approached the cow and wanted her to think of her favourite Deity for mokṣa instead of weeping as she is under his control. Nandinī replied that she won't feel sorry to lose her life in her prayer to Śiva but was feeling for her calf expecting her return, and wanted permission to go to her calf to be entrusted to her friends for protection. But the tiger declined her request. She represented meekly to the tiger that in case she broke her promise the worst of sins like those of Brahmincide,

deceiving parents, sexual enjoyment with women in menses, sleeping barebodied, betrayal, doing harm to person from whom help is received, defiling cows, virgins, Brahmins, eating meat, breaking vow etc., would befall on her. Impressed by the immeasurable love towards her calf, the tiger permitted cow to return forthwith entrusting her calf to the care of her friends. Surprised by the unusual visit of mother in agitation, the calf enquired its mother the reason. The cow wanted her calf to drink milk first and later told her calf all that transpired between her and the tiger and the necessity for her return immediately as a prey to the tiger. The calf appealed pitifully that it would also follow its mother so that both of them may be devoured by the tiger and it would get the merit of the devotees that revered their mother. But Nandinī did not accede to that course. She went away to make best of her promise and approached on her way her friends and told them of her predicament. Their advice that it would not tantamount to sin if one was forced to utter a lie in such predicament was not relished by her. (Lying for the sake of womenfolk, protection of a race, negotiating marriage, at time of death, being robbed off completely are not considered sins). But Nandinī disagreed with them telling that lying to save oneself was improper though resorted to save the noble souls. They were all-praise of the truthfulness of Nandinī, and assured her that her child would be taken care of by them. Praying to God for protecting her young one, she meekly submitted herself before the tiger volunteering herself to be devoured by him. Moved to pity and wonder-struck by her true conduct, the tiger requested Nandinī to teach him gospel to alleviate his sins to have a refined rebirth, taken to killing and eating animals as he was. Thereupon the cow told him that penance was the duty in the age of Kṛta, Meditation in the age of Treta, the performance of sacrifices in Dwāpara, the offering of gifts in Kali. Protection (Abhayapradānam) was the best of all gifts. One vouchsafing fearlessness to all the animate and inanimate would attain the supreme Brahman.

The tiger, finding it difficult to practiṣe, there being no other resort to him except violence to sustain, wanted another easier course. Then the cow suggested to offer prayers to the meritorious Liṅga in the forest prostrating himself before the idol in

the early morning. She guided him to the Liṅga and when the tiger followed up the same, he was relieved of the curse and became the original king. He extolled the cow for the sane advice and felt Dūrvasa's curse as a blessing in disguise, as he had the rare privilege of worshipping the meritorious Liṅga. He led a pious religious life, dedicating himself in devotion, installed the idols of Umā and Śaṅkara, and dug a tank. One who bathes in that tank and worships the Deities on the 14th day of light fortnight in Māghamāsam would be free from the chain of births.

The Cow Nandini and Dilipa[16]

The story of the Cow Nandinī and the Emperor Dilipa, (originally depicted in Padmapurāṇa) is retold in the second canto in 'Raghuvaṁśa' in the following manner.

Dilipa, one of the illustrious kings of the Solar Dynasty having reached his advanced age without progeny, went with his wife Sudakṣiṇā to the Hermitage of Vasiṣtha, his preceptor and sought for a way out when the sage, endued as he was with the vision of all times, past, present and future, told the king that while the king was returning from the Heaven he failed to pay homage to Kāmadhenu lying under the shades of celestial tree, in his anxiety to meet his queen on menstrual bathing, when the cow cursed him that unless he worshipped her progeny he would not get progeny. The curse was not however heard by him in his anxiety; much less by the charioteer, Sūta, because of the din of the chariot-wheel. Hence, Vasiṣtha advised him to serve his sacrificial cow and the calf along with his wife with sincere devotion to beget a son. On Vasiṣtha's advice the king began serving and guiding the cow from attack of wild beasts equipped with a bow and arrows.

Next day in the early hours of the day the cow was worshipped by his queen with the offer of flowers etc. He kept on following the cow as her shadow. When the cow grazed he subsisted on roots etc., and when the cow took rest in the shades of trees he too sat by her side, and when the cow drank water he also followed suit. The king himself offered grass to her, removed the wild flies from her body and caressed her

deeming her as his Guru. In the evening when he returned with the cow they were received by Sudakṣiṇā warmly. She prostrated before the cow paying due homage, worshipped her, smeared sandal paste, yellow rice, fragrant smoke and lights with sincere devotion. Both the King and the Queen rendered their faithful and dedicated service to the cow for twenty-one days.

On the next day, the grand-daughter of the cow with the inclination to get at the real-heart of the king, entered into a grazy hallow of Himālaya mountain. As the king was by then perceiving the beauties of the mountain, taking advantage of his inadvertence, unawares a lion charged on the cow and forcibly dragged her and on hearing the lowing of the cow, the king looked for the cow and saw the lion that pounced on the cow. The sight of it made him petrified, filled as he was with grief in his heart. He moved his right hand to take out the arrow from the quiver to kill the lion but he became to his utter chagrin and dismay motionless unable to shoot the lion. To his utter amazement, the lion told the king in human voice that he knew the king as born in the Solar Dynasty and self-introduced that he was one of the attendants of Śaṁbhu, that once when a wild elephant damaged the tender bark of a 'Devadāru' tree by scratching, the consort of Śaṁbhu—who treated the tree as her offspring—was filled with compassion and transformed the elephant into a lion to keep guard of that tree and so any animal coming that way would become prey to the lion. The lion further said that since Lord Īśwara was mounting on its robust back, the king could not, unlike in the case of ordinary lions, hurt him and that the cow was sent by Gods for his meal. Then the king replied that since both Umā and Śaṅkara were objects of reverence for him and consequently Kuṁbhodara would also command their respect being their attendant, and since he was protecting the cow Nandini entrusted to him by his precepter the illustrious Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahma, for obtaining progeny, she was being worshipped by him for some time and that the cow was the grand-daughter of the illustrious Kāmadhenu, and was not equal to any of the cows. Hence he would not be able to convince his preceptor by offering any other cow and therefore in order to enable him to carry out the

behest of his preceptor, he was prepared to offer his body and by doing so neither his preceptor nor the lion would forego either the wealth or the food. He stressed that he would secure the auspicious abode by sacrificing his life for the sake of a cow. The lion on hearing the words of the king became silent. Then the righteous king fell on the ground with his head bent and was expecting the severe pounce on him when there fell a shower of flowers released by Deities. The king stood up when he heard 'Oh! dear son! Please rise up!'. He saw only the cow but not the lion. Then the cow said that it was all an illusion created by her that by the efficacy of her preceptor, she was immune even to death and even God of Death could not injure—not to speak of mortals. Pleased by the self-sacrificing devotion, the cow granted a boon to the king. Then the king begged the cow to bless him with a child. The illustrious cow that would grant the wish of deities, paternal deities, sages, human beings and all other beings, directed the king who was standing before her with awe and reverence with folded hands, to drink her milk first in a leafy vessel there, and in the hermitage also later, at the command of his preceptor so as to be blessed with a son who would become the perpetuator of his race and a mighty warrior. The king obeyed the bid of the cow accordingly and brought the cow in the evening to the hermitage. The king and the queen approached the hermit couple. Vasiṣṭha on seeing the blushes of the king and the queen informed them he knew all that transpired in the forest and congratulated the king for his achievement. Later Dilīpa begot a son by name Raghu.

Beef-Taking and Its Consequences[17]

Once a lady in a drunken state with a longing to have flesh entered into a stall where goats and cattle were existing. While she was beside herself, unwittingly taking a cow-calf found there as a goat she killed the same, though the calf was lowing piteously and took the carcass to her home. As she began to come to senses, she could to her utter dismay and chagrin realise the folly committed by her in having killed a cow-calf taking it mistakenly as a goat and in repentence (due to the merit in store done in her previous births) she uttered 'Śiva, Śiva'. She brooded over her hasty act for some

time and later prepared her dish with half the flesh of the calf and threw away the remaining half, crying aloud that a tiger had entered the stall and ate away the calf, just to lend a make-believe story to the neighbours and other spectators who would gather there. Thus she saved her skin.

In the course of time she visited the abode of Yama. Yama after considering Dharma, in accordance with the past deeds done by her, consigned her to a dreadful part of the hell. She in her next birth became a Candāla woman. Later she became blind and was struck with the dreadful leprosy. She was having the subconscious drive of her having taken in her previous birth the flesh of a calf after killing the same and her present birth was to reap the cosequences of her own conduct.

Harm and injury done whether wittingly or unwittingly to the cow is fraught with grave consequences, it being irreligious and heinous sin. Hence, by thought, word or act one should never even so much as dream of doing harm to the dumb cattle.

Arjuna's Protection of Cows From Thieves[18]

Once Arjuna entered the apartment of Dharmarāja, while he was along with Draupadī in privacy. Then Arjuna greeted him and told that he had entered in his apartment to take his bow and arrows to rescue the cows of a Brahmin. He asked his permission also. Then Yudhiṣṭhira permitted him to restore the stolen cows of the Brahmin immediately. But he ordered him to go on a pilgrimage afterwards for a period of twelve years, as an expiation of sin attached to his entering his apartment while he was with his spouse in privacy. Arjuna confessed his guilt and mounting his chariot, he immediately rode through the path from where the cows were led by the thieves. Arjuna attacked those thieves and killed them in a jiffy and brought the cows back and thus restored them to the high-souled Brahmin. Afterwards, in compliance with the behest of his brother he set out on a pilgrimage from the city Śakraprastha.

Criticism: To save the cows of Brahmins from robbers is permissible even by transgressing the path of Dharma—and this is made out by the example of Arjuna. It therefore goes to

prove that cow protection is more than anything—even the observance of Dharma.

Story of Gayatri[19]

Once Brahma had to perform a sacrifice. His spouse Sāvitrī was not present at the sacrificial chamber in time. Lest it should become late, Brahma sent Indra to bring a bride for him immediately. Indra went on searching for a bride and found somewhere a girl endued with all divine qualities and virtues. But she was a cowherdess. So, Indra made her enter the face of a cow and dragged her out from the Anus of the cow. It is stated previously that Brahmins and cows are the two branches offshooting from one and the same family. For this reason, the cow-herdess was converted into a Brahmin girl. Later Brahma married her according to the Sastraic rites.

Comment : Since cow and Brahmin are considered equal, equal importance and sanctity to them both are attached from the religious angle of view.

The Story of Nandiswara (Bull)[20]

Śilāda performed severe penance for being blessed with a son of immortality and after a prolonged period of austerity, Śakra appeared before him and on hearing the wish of Śilāda advised him to propitiate Mahādeva (Īśwara) inasmuch as it was beyond his prowess to bless him with such a desire, since mortals are doomed to die inevitably one day or other.

Thus being advised, Śilāda began performing severe tapas in order to gratify Īśwara and he was reduced almost to skeleton by the time when one thousand celestial years lapsed by when Lord Śiva appeared before him and blessed him telling that he would get a son omniscient and well-versed in all Sastras; but Śilāda sought for a son equal to and immortal as Īśwara himself. Īśwara granted the boon telling that he was requested by Brahma and other sages to incarnate among mortals as the son of Śilāda (Nandi).

When Nandi was 7 years of age, two sages Mitra and Varuṇa visited him and told that there remained only one year for him

to live. On hearing this, Śilāda was afflicted with deep sorrow but Nandi consoled his father telling that he would conquer death by performing austerities and assured his father that by the grace of Mahādeva he would be blessed with immortality. Nandi performed severe tapas—harder and surpassing the penances performed by other sages. Gratified Śiva appeared before him and said that the two sages were sent by him and he need not entertain the fear of death any more and he would remain on a par with him immuned from old age and death as the lord of 'Gaṇās' (devout attendants) and would be present with him with equal omnipotency. So saying Īśwara sprinkled the holy waters rest on his mount on Nandi and blessed him to become Nandi and consecrated him as Lord of Gaṇas. That is why with Nandi, Lord Śiva is said to be present always and Nandi is the embodiment of Śiva.

Kamadhenu—Jamadagni's Apple of the Eye[21]

Once Kārtaviryārjuna went on a hunt into the forest. He became tired and swooned in the forest. Then the sage Jamadagni found him, and taking pity on him sprinkled water on his face whereupon the Kārtaviryārjuna came to consciousness, and paid his respects to the sage thankfully. The sage blessed him and took him to his hermitage and wanted the king to accept his hospitality. The king said that when there are so many in his retinue that accompanied him, it would not be proper on his part singly to enjoy his hospitality. Then the sage approached his celestial cow 'Kāmadhenu' and reported her the matter. Kāmadhenu told the sage that he could feed even the entire world with her grace. On her mere thought, there came many edibles relished with all the six flavours to the astonishment of the king. The king was lured by the merit of the cow and he requested the sage to give him the cow. The sage told the king that the cow was offered to Brahma by Kṛṣṇa in the Goloka and Brahma offered the same to Bhṛgu who in turn gave her to him and that she was the apple of his eye, exceptional and singular in the three worlds as she was in her superiority endued with wish-yielding power. So saying

the sage represented to the king that the cow Kāmadhenu should not be offered to him and if the king insisted on his desire, the sage would reduce him to ashes. Therefore the king simply saluted the sage and took leave of him.

But, the drive from the king's subconscious made him send his soldiers to bring the cow. Then the sage went to the cow and reported her all about what was going on and wept. Kamadhenu replied that she would not go to the king, unless it was the sage's wish that she should and thus consoled the sage. So saying, the cow at her will created several weapons and missiles and drives. She gave all the weapons and missīles to the sage and made him undaunted and courageous. When the king came to know of all this, he enlarged his army by indenting for added number from his capital and there arose a war between the king's army on the one part and the sage on the other. The army of the cow smashed the army of the king. Unable to withstand the strength of the cow's army, the king became fainted whereupon the sage sprinkled water and brought him to senses. Again the king harped on the same string asking for the cow and the sage persuaded him not to ask for the cow.

Again the battle broke out but on the intervention of Lord Brahma and tactful handling of the situation, both parties were convinced and so the king went to his palace and the sage to his hermitage.

But the king's desire to own the cow Kāmadhenu was haunting him. So he attacked the sage over again on another occasion, whereupon on the sage charging a missile Jrumbhaṇa the king fell unconscious and as before the sage protected the king and blessed him. The king immediately after coming to senses rose up and attacked the sage with a spear. In the meanwhile the cow was afraid and went to the hermitage. The king charged the missile given by Datta and capable of annihilating one person in the war. The sage struck by it fell down dead. Kāmadhenu mourned the sage's death and repaired to Goloka and informed of what took place to Lord Kṛṣṇa and after paying her obeisance and respects to Him she went to the herd of Kāmadhenus. The tears shed by Kāmadhenu fell on the earth and became heaps of precious stones.

Kamadhenu and Parasurama[22]

The king Kārtaviryārjuna went into a forest ahunting and went into the hermitage of Jamadagni Muni. The Muni received the king and the retinue very affectionately and hospitably befitting the royal family. Kāmadhenu, the cow of plenty and the bestower of every wish, granted all that is required to receive the king and his retinue properly.

The king developed an eye-sore on the Muni possessing Kamadhenu, and managed to take by force the cow from the Muni though the cow was making silent remonstrances to part with the illustrious Muni.

Paraśurāma, on being told of what transpired grew wild like fire, took up a terrible axe, armour, and a bow with arrows and went in search of the king. On perceiving Paraśurāma entering the city of Mahiṣmati, the king sent out seventeen Akṣauhinis of terrible soldiers equipped with elephants, chariots, horses, clubs, arrows, swords, pikes, daggers and lances but single-handed Paraśurāma killed the whole army.

The king infuriated rushed to battle-field only to find all his army in pool of blood, dead and dying having become prey to the arrows and axe of Paraśurāma. Kārtaviryarjuna darted at Paraśurāma five hundred arrows simultaneously holding like number of bows in his thousand hands. With one bow and arrow the wielder of weapons (Paraśurāma) cut off those arrows at one stretch. When Kārtaviryārjuna was hurling towards the battle-field mountains and trees Paraśurāma with the sharpest axes vehemently cut off the thousand hands (resembling the hood of serpents) of the king, then the head and made the ten thousand sons of the king flee away from the field for fear of facing the same fate of their father. He returned to hermitage with the cow of plenty with her calf intact. Kāmadhenu is an inevitable adjunct in the Yajña in which perpetual sacred fire is to be maintained.

But the pauranic story goes to tell the Jamadagni was massacred by Kārtaviryārjuna and the Muni's wife felt sorry over the death and Paraśurāma took a vow to get rid of the earth from the Kṣatriya race.

Prithu Milches the Earth in the Shape of Kamadhenu[23]

In olden days when there was a great famine, being afflicted with hunger, all the subjects requested the king for providing them nourishment. The king taking the cause of the famine as a result of the mother Earth swallowing all the seeds of plants grew wild with the Earth and like a Tripurāri in wrath, he took up his bow and arrow and aimed a tremendous weapon at the Earth. Thereupon the Earth terror-stricken assumed the form of a cow and fled away like a she-deer pursued by a hunter.

The entreaties of Earth proved in vain as Pṛthu was impervious. She appealed to him to encompass the well-being of all creatures as preached and practised by the wise sages and when an ignorant is able to attain well-being by following the wise sayings, a learned man disregarding the same fails to achieve success. As all the Oṣadhis (annual plants) were being consumed by the impious persons, as there was no protection or regard for the Earth even from patriarchs like himself, in order to save the Oṣadhis created by Lord Brahma she devoured them to guard them against the wicked hands and to preserve them for celebrating sacrifices in future. In order therefore to draw the Osadhis back from her belly she wanted him to select a proper calf and a vessel to milch her in the form of a cow, to have sweet milk. She wanted him to level the surface of herself (Earth) and God willing, he would have plenty of rice and milk everywhere. Accordingly King Pṛthu picked up Manu as the calf and used his own palms as the milking vessel and milched of the Earth all the Oṣadhis. Alike the wise men and later the rest milched of the essence of Earth.

The foremost of the Ṛṣis used Bṛhaspati as calf to draw out from Earth the essence of the Vedas in the vessels of words, mind and ears; the celestials used Indra as calf to have nectar and power of body and mind from earth in golden vessels; the Daityas and Danavas milched wine (Asava) from Earth in iron contains using Prahlāda as the calf; the Gandharvas and Apsaras drew honey together with beauty and gracefulness in lotus vessel using Viśwāvasu, the Pitṛs (manes) drew Kavya in earthen pots using Aryamas as the calf; the Siddhas drew in vessels of Ākāśa the milk representing Aṇima and other wealth (Siddhis) using

Kapila as the calf, and the Vidyādharas drew magical powers from Earth. Making use of Māya Dānava as the calf all others deft in the art of illusion drew from Earth the best illusive powers to produce anything they think of.

Thereafter making use of Rudra as the calf the Yakṣas, the Rāksasas, the Ghosts and Piśācas milched out of the earth blood like wine (asava) in a shull. The serpents drew deadly poison using Takṣaka; the beasts drew grass using the Great Bull; the animals with huge teeth and living upon flesh drew flesh using lion as the calf in the vessels of their own bodies; the birds using Garuḍa as calf drew insects and fruits; the trees using Banian tree as the calf drew divine juice; the mountains using the Himālaya as the calf drew various metals in their table lands.

Thus the mother Earth having been brought under the subjection of King Pṛthu all the animals considering the head of their own class as the calf drew milk for being conferred upon them their desired ends. Pṛthu thus having extracted from earth food became attached to earth treating her as his daughter. At first Pṛthu the son of Vena smothered the summits with the end of his bow to level the whole Earth and arranged for the sustenance of his subjects, later laid out habitations separately for the people, made villages, cities, towns, fortifications, hamlets of cow-herds, sheds of kine, military encampments, mines, land for cultivation, new villages at the foot of mountains. His subjects lived with pleasure, peace, plenty and prosperity.

Krsna's Pastoral Life[24]

When Lord Kṛṣṇa was playing fearlessly on the breast of Pūtanā he was separated from her by a cow-herd. Yeśoda and Rohiṇī in order to ward off the evil effect to the boy waved the cow's tail on his head, bathed him to cow's urine and sprinkled the dust of the cow's hoof on his body and with cow dung inscribed the twelve different names of Viṣṇu on different parts of his body.[a] (From this one can infer how much esteem the cow used to enjoy at the hands of Gopas in those days).

The kine as well as the mothers of Kṛṣṇa, with motherly affection breast-fed Lord Kṛṣṇa and they should attain the same mode of existence as got by Pūtanā.[b]

For the welfare of his son. Nanda gifted away to the twice-born ones many cows of the finest type adorned with cloths, garlands and gold chains. (The gift of cows to the deserved is considered as conducive to the well-being of one's progeny).[c]

Lord Kṛṣṇa used to laugh out when the Gopikas used to complain about his childish pranks like untethering the calved untimely, stealing away and drinking delicious curd and milk and distributing the same to monkeys and breaking the pots containing curd and milk. By piling wooden seats and mortars etc., as expediency to get at the milk, curd etc., hung high, and by striking holes into the pots, he used to enjoy the fun. The resplendence of his jewels used to help him in locating the things even in dark-rooms.[d]

When Lord Kṛṣṇa was being suckled by Yaśodā and when she hurriedly went away in the middle of sucking of Kṛṣṇa, to put down the boiling milk from unheaving, Kṛṣṇa in a fit of rage bit his tender lips and broke down the pot of curd with a piece of stone and ate the butter.[e]

When Yaśoda re-entered the room of churning, she found the pot broken. She guessed it was the act of her son. She saw Kṛṣṇa seated on a wooden mortar distributing butter to the monkeys. On seeing his mother with a rod Kṛṣṇa took to heels and made his mother chase in vain after him. When even the mind of Yogins find it difficult to approach him easily, it is no wonder if Yaśoda in a rage could not catch Kṛṣṇa.[f]

On the birth day of Kṛṣṇa, Yaśoda told him to confer kine upon Brahmins after taking a bath and incited him to decorate himself just like his playmates who had been well-dressed and decorated by their mothers.[g]

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were tending cattle along with their mates. The demon in the guise of a calf joined the other calves. Acyuta held the two hind legs of the calf (demon in disguise) along with the tail, whirled it for a while and threw it up at the top of Kapittha tree, which along with the huge-bodied demon fell down.[h]

While the boys were sporting in the forest, one mighty asura (Agha) assumed the form of a huge Ajagara (snake) a yojana long and lay down on the way to devour the boys. Taking the expanded mouth of the snake to be the presiding deity the boys

entered the mouth of Ajagara (Aghāsura) smilingly, looking at the face of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The boys and the calves who had entered the belly of the Asura were not however at once devoured as the Asura was waiting for Kṛṣṇa to follow suit, as the Asura wanted to revenge upon Kṛṣṇa who put an end to his brother Baka and sister Putana. Soon Kṛṣṇa entered into the mouth of the Asura and began developing his own form in the throat of that Asura. Soon the throat of that huge bodied demon was obstructed and his eyes burst out of their sockets and he began running helter-skelter. As the wind inside his body was obstructed and he suffered suffocation, all his vital breaths went out with the wind. Thus the Divine Mukunda revived all his friends and their calves who were shorn off their vitality by his life-giving graceful looks and made them come out of the mouth of Ajagara. (Thus it will be seen that Kṛṣṇa was the saviour of the cows and the cow-herds).[i]

By the privilege conferred on the cows and the wives of the cow-herds, of Vraja because of this illusion, Lord Kṛṣṇa rendered them blessed as they fed him with affection the unparalleled ambrosia of milk from the udders of the cows and breast of the milk maids—(Nothing but real and innate affection satiates Lord Viṣṇu).[j]

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the ever-joyful and delighted, roamed about with his fellow-boys in the prosperous Bṛndāvana, grazing the cattle on the banks of streams near the mountain.[k] Occasionally Lord Kṛṣṇa delighted in shouting the name of the cattle grazing at a distance sonorously to the pleasure of the kine and cow-herds. Sometimes he used to imitate the Cakora, the Krauńca, Cakravāka and the Bharadwāja or the peacock in their melodious notes.[l]

Kṛṣṇa's lock of hair was soiled with the dust from the hoofs of cows.[m]

The Destruction of the Infatuation of Brahma[25]

Once the calves were allowed to graze freely in the green-fields and the cowherds untying the knots of their bags began to eat with Lord in delight.

Unawares, when the minds of the cow-herd boys were immersed

in Acyuta, the calves wandered far away into the deep forest with thick bushy growth. When the cow-herd boys found the calves missing, they were filled with fear. Lord Kṛṣṇa promised to restore the calves to them and with a morsel of food in his hand repaired the mountains, caves, holes and other dangerous spots in the dense forest in quest of the missing calves.

Brahma having seen Kṛṣṇa releasing the Asura, Agha wanted to have another thing to achieve. In the guise of a boy he pilfered away his calves and the cow-herd boys elsewhere and hid himself. Kṛṣṇa finding neither the calves nor the cow-herd boys roaming on the bank of the river could realise that it must be the work of Brahma. To satisfy the mothers of the cow-herd boys and also Brahma, the Lord converted himself into the calves and the cow-herd boys. (The transformation being quite identical, Lord proved that Viṣṇu is identical with the universe). Thus having made the calves and the cow-herd boys from out of his own self, Kṛṣṇa placed the calves in their respective folds and entered the respective houses of the boys. Rising up with the sound of his flute, mothers of the boys embraced the Great Brahman with motherly affection and suckled him with their milk, flowing out as sweet as the ambrosia and intoxicating as Asava wine and this way he was given every motherly care every evening on return from pasture. The kine also used to feed their calves with their self-flowing milk.

Thus there was an ardent love and affection developed by the cows and the milk-women towards Lord Kṛṣṇa. Hari's love in turn towards them also became intense. Thus, the affection of the inhabitants of Vraja towards their own children began becoming intense and limitless in so short a span of time of one year. And Lord Kṛṣṇa in the guise of calves and cow-herd boys sported in the forest and pasture lands for one year. At the first year was almost drawing to a close, Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma entered into the forest while they were tending the calves. Some cows that grazed on the Mount Govardhana saw their calves grazing near Vraja. Out of motherly affection the cows ran fast towards Vraja, unmindful of the guards and difficulties in traversing the distance and they appeared as having two legs, their necks folded with humps, faces kept up and milk flowing down from their udders. Those cows which had again borne young

ones began licking the limbs of their old calves and gave milk to them. The milkmen running after them were ashamed of their attempts to obstruct them. When they saw their sons by the side of their calves, their attachment for them became great and they embraced those boys with their arms and smelt their heads with great delight. Thus, within the span of a wink of the eye, the one year period lapsed by, when Lord Brahma could see Hari (Kṛṣṇa) sporting as usual with his playmates. Brahma amused himself of the illusion he created but was duped when he could not ultimately identify who amongst them were the real boys and who were not. Viṣṇu is the embodiment of illusion and nothing can blindfold him on the face of earth.

Protection of the Cows[26]

The Almighty Kṛṣṇa knowing that the waters of the river Kālindi had been poisoned by the great serpent Kāliya wanted to rid the serpent from that river, and render the water pure for being used by cattle and men etc.

When Kṛṣṇa was caught by Kāliya in the coils of the venemous serpent, the sight moved the kine, the oxen and the calves to pity and they began to low aloud in utter distress standing as helpless spectators shedding tears, inasmuch as the dumb animals are also amenable to the tender care and responsible to the human behaviour.

Lord Kṛṣṇa bent the raised hood of Kāliya and mounted upon the broad hood and trampled and unable to bear the stampeding of the mighty Kṛṣṇa the erect hoods of the hundred-headed serpent began vomiting blood from his mouth and nose and atleast he became swooned.

Thus it can be seen that Lord is the unsparing and scrupulous chastiser of wicked and the protector of the helpless weaklings, who look upon him for help.

On the entreaties of the wives of Kāliya Kṛṣṇa left the swooning serpent free after he was smashed on his head by the kicks of the mighty Kṛṣṇa. When Kāliya came to his senses, he made adequate amends for his wickedness and prayed for the Lord's mercy with repentence. Thereupon the Lord wanted him to go to the ocean with his kinsmen ard family in order to

render Kālindi river fit for being used by the helpless cows and human beings.

Remembering this injunction of Lord Kṛṣṇa on Kāliya any mortal shall recite it during the periods of both the twilights to be free from fear of the serpent race.

Krsna Upholds the Mountain Govardhana[27]

Indra came to know that Kṛṣṇa managed to stop adoring Indra in Vraja and he grew wild against the milkmen headed by Nanda, lead by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

At the behest of Indra, the Samvartka clouds were set free and they flew over Nanda's kingdom of Gokula and caused incessant downpour. The cattle began shivering with biting cold because of the deluge torrential rains, not to speak of the cowherds and their wives and others. They all in a body sought shelter in Govinda. The kiṇe too shivering with cold approached Lord Kṛṣṇa for help. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa could know that the fury of the element is the result of the enraged Indra's bid, inasmuch as the torrential rains are inopportune, to serve as a warning to drive home to the Nandas to celebrate the sacrifice in his honour. Kṛṣṇa felt it as the height of foolishness and egoism on the part of Indra to have created so much arrogance and terror, considering himself as the sole Lord of the people and since it was too much of him as a celestial, in whom the principle of goodness should dwell, Kṛṣṇa made up his mind to teach a lesson to Indra by protecting the pastoral kingdom and thus undo the acts of Indra. Just like anybody holding an umbrella over his head with ease, Kṛṣṇa uprooted the Govardhana mountain with one hand and protected the cattle and dwellers of Vraja in order to give them shelter underneath the mountain fearlessly. Accordingly, the cowherds with all their members of family, wealth, carts and attendants and cattle took shelter underneath the Mount, for seven days and all the while Kṛṣṇa was holding the mountain high in his hand without budging even by an inch from the spot where he was standing at the first instance, unmindful of the hunger and thirst and personal discomforts. Lord in His endeavour to help the devotees and helpless beings foregoes His own comforts.

Lord Indra having thus been thwarted in his manoeuvres to destroy the kingdom of Vraja came to realisation and pleaded for protection. He represented to Lord Kṛṣṇa meekly and helplessly that because of his being carried away by wrath for the failure of the part of the Nandas to honour him by performing animal sacrifices and because of his pride of his powers of destruction, he tried to destroy the kingdom of Vraja by causing heavy showers and storms but his attempts proved a failure in Kṛṣṇa's hands and he was there with all pride gone seeking protection of the Lord. Then Kṛṣṇa drove home to him that he was proud of his sovereignty over the celestials and in a fit of intoxication with the influence of his riches and powers, became blind to realities. One could see Lord only when one is free from attachments of riches and vanity. So he commanded Śakra to return to his Kingdom of heaven renouncing all pride and lead a life with propriety of manners to re-establish himself.

For the sake of devotees Lord is always ready and willing to forego his own personal comforts and undertake any risk. Pride and riches blindfold one and keeps him away from Him. A true seeker of Lord should always renounce all vanities and rely on Him for protection and lead.

On being delegated by Brahman when Surabhi, the mother of bovine species and of magnanimous heart approached in the company of her offsprings and entreated Lord Kṛṣṇa to assume the function of Indra for the welfare of the kine, the Vipras and the celestials and the pious, Kṛṣṇa accedes to her request and his coronation was performed by Indra in the midst of celestial mothers who induced and in the company of gods and the sages, Surabhi soaking Him with her milk and Airavata soaking Him with the heavenly waters of Ganges drawn by its trunk. They attributed the name Govinda (the protector of cows) to Kṛṣṇa.

The Story of King Sindhu[28]

The king of the country Sindhu was a notorious character, taken to all cruelties, wickedness and seditious traits. He was a Brahminicide and foeticide. When once he went on ahunting he happened to kill a cow of Kapila species also. As a conse-

quence thereof he was murdered by his minister, in order to succeed him. The ambassadors of Yama took him to Yamaloka, threw him into the boiling cauldron Kumbhīpāka. The blazes of the fire immediately became cool. Then Yama and his retinue were wonder struck. When Yama anxiously enquired Vyāsa for the unexpected transformation, Vyāsa said that the king died there where the dust of Dvāraka fell from the hand of somebody. Because of its merit, he was redeemed from his sins. A person who besmears his body with Gopicandana equals Nārāyaṇa. A person who happens to see such a person wearing Gopicandana is relieved of his sin even from that of Brahminicide. He who hears the greatness of Gopicandana will go to the abode of Kṛṣṇa.

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25. *Ibid.*, Skanda Chapter 13.
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11

Holy Places Named After the Cow

The Gomati[1]

The last among the western tributaries of the Sindhu mentioned in the nadīstuti is the Gomatī. It also finds place in the shape of a hymn in the eighth book of the Ṛgveda, inasmuch as the description is quite identical with the modern Gomal.[1] Since the banks of Gomati was abounded with cows in the Ṛgvedic age, the river has come to be known as Gomati (possessing cows).

River Carmanvati (Chambal)[2]

In olden days, King Rantideva performed on a grand scale many Gomedha sacrifices. Many kine were slaughtered. From the juice that was secreted by the skins of the slaughtered cattle, a river was formed and it came to be known as Carmaṇvati.

In the Meghasandeśa[2a] also Kalidasa described the same river. Mallinātha, the commentator comments the particular verse. According to him the following is the version :

From the hide of the slaughtered animals blood that oozed out and flowed into a stream when King Rantideva performed a great sacrifice and the said river came to be called Carmaṇvatī.

The River Nanda Sarasvati[3]

King Prabhanjana, an avowed warrior to protect the people,

went one day ahunting. He killed a deer with his arrow while she was suckling her young one. Thereupon the deer cursed the king to become a carniverous tiger. On regrets and entreaties expressed by the king, she said that he would be relieved of the curse by a cow, Nandā, after a century. Soon, the king was transformed into a cruel tiger.

A herd of cow from a nearby stall used to graze in the forest. One among them was Nandā, a beautiful cow. She happened to enter into the forest and come across the tiger one day. Knowing her fate, she began lamenting over the fate of her young one. She represented to the tiger in shrill voice that she was sad not for herself but for the young one tied in the cattle house in milk-age. She sought for permission to allow her go to her young one and entrust the same to her friends to be looked after by them promising to be a prey to him on return. The tiger was adamant. Thereupon, she vowed telling that the worst of sins would befall on her in case she could not make best of her promise. The sin of slaughtering a Brahmin, parents, the sin of hunters, wretched and those poisoning others, the sin of defiling the cow-sheds, the sin of beating others when asleep, the sin of offering a maid already betrothed to another, the sin of partiality shown to one wife by one having more than one wife, the sin of ploughing yoked with two unequal oxen, the sin of one who disturbing a sacred story while being narrated, the sin of disappointing a person visiting him etc., are all the worst of sins. On hearing this, the tiger permitted the cow to come soon after meeting and entrusting her calf to her friends, warning her at the same time not to be misguided by any dissuasions of her friends that it would not become a sin if one breaks one's oaths made in crises, especially in matters relating to ladies, matrimony, protection of cow, or at the time of death.

The cow trickling tears with agony lowing piteously went to her calf. On enquiry of the cause for its mother's distress, after allowing the calf to drink milk from her, Nandā narrated of her oath and the necessity to volunteer herself as prey to the tiger. Thinking that it is worthless to live without mother and better to die along with mother it sought permission to let it go with her. But Nandā did not accede to it and advised it to follow certain things after her death. Nandā met her friends and narra-

ted them of her vow and requested them to take care of her young calf. She was impervious to the dissuasions of her friends as she knew that it is not a sin to break a vow for the sake of saving a noble soul but not one's own. If the whole universe based upon truth, the ocean without transgressing its limit, the emperor offering his entire earth to Viṣṇu still lives in the nether lands, though duped, if the mountain Vindhya sticks to her height, it is all because of abiding truth and truth alone. The Heaven, (Salvation) and Dharma and everything centres round the consecrated words of truth. A person devoid of truth (in his speech, mind and act) is sure to be devoid of all. Truth preponderates the reap of thousand horse sacrifices. Even a wretched Brahmin attains salvation by adherence to truth, which is higher and nobler than the very penance and great learning. Unflinching faith to, and strenuous and scrupulous practice of truth at odds and ordeals is worthy ideal. Truth is the very treasure-trove of one's family, superior to all stages of man—Brahmacarya, Gārhastya, Vānaprastha and Sanyāsa. On being told of this, and her undaunted desire to be true to her word, her friends wished her well that her soul might be greeted even by gods and demons for her sacrificing bent of mind. Nandā prayed to the forest deities to take care of her son and finally stood before the tiger offering herself to him. In the meanwhile her calf also pursued its mother and stood before the tiger. When Nandā wanted to devour her first and then her son, the tiger was moved to pity by her abiding faith to truth. Then the tiger said that it was to test her that he left her in the first instance, as otherwise he would have killed her then and there. He promised to treat the cow as his sister and her son as his nephew and he made adequate amends for his cruelty. He requested the cow to teach him some moral for being followed to get redeemed from his sins. He admitted he killed many animals and wanted a way out to have a wash of the sins. Then Nanda told him that penance was the duty in the age of Krta, seeking knowledge the duty in the age of Treta, performing sacrifices the duty in the age of Dwāpara and offering gifts the duty in the age of Kali. The attainment of the supreme Brahman and fearlessness could be had by one who protected all the animate and inanimate creations. Non-violence was superior to all others—

there is no penance emulating the virtues of non-violence. The entire Dharma centres round non-violence.

Hearing this, the tiger recollected his past life and narrated the cow how because of a curse by a she-deer he was changed into a tiger, a century ago and enquired the name of truthful cow. When the cow told the tiger that her name was Nandā and her master's name was also Nandā and wanted the tiger to take her as prey, the tiger relieved of his curse became king Prabhanjana endowed with all might and beauty. In the meanwhile the god of Dharma approached them to have a look of the illustrious cow. When Dharma informed that he came there to see her, a lover of truth, and enquired of what boon she would like to have, Nanda said that she and her son being sure of attaining glorious regions, that place may be named after her and let the sages perform their penance there and accordingly it was conferred. Henceforth, the river which lies there became known as Nanda Sarasvatī.

Any person enjoys great pleasure merely by taking the name, though he could not visit the abode. Persons who depart their soul there are sure to become demigods (Vidyādharas).

Thus it will be seen that truth and non-violence are worthy ideals to be followed despite odds and ordeals and god-sent protection will always come to him who practises them with unflinching faith.

Indradyumna Lake[4]

Indradyumna was a staunch devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa. For the propitiation of his Lord, he bestowed many cows upon Brahmins with reverence. He performed many horse sacrifices also and as a part of it he offered crores of decorated cows as sacrificial fee to the priests.

At the time of offer, by the touch of the hoofs of the cows there formed a pit and later the pit was filled with the water of gift and became a sacred pool (Tīrtha). A person who bathes in that pool and propitiates manes and deities accordingly is sure to obtain the merit of a horse sacrifice. The lake is named after that great king 'Indradyumna'. A person performing obsequies there saves all his twenty-one generations and is glori-

fied in the region of Brahma. The lake is as sacred as the very river Ganges.

Govatsa[5]

This is the name of that holy place where Lord of Aṁbika, the unborn, in the form of a liṅga stayed there in the form of a cow-calf. The Holy place where the Lord of all Universe incarnated himself is proclaimed as the meritorious place for gifting away cows by the great sages.

Gomukha Tirtha[6]

Once King Ambarīṣa performed severe penance due to the distress caused by the death of his son. Lord Viṣṇu propitiated with his austerity and hard penance blessed him with a son, who became the famous Suvarca later on. But, Suvarca gradually became a victim to the incorrigible scourge of leprosy since he had to reap the consequences of his bad deeds committed in his previous birth. Again, the king Ambarīṣa performed penance for the second time to make his son relieved of the dreadful disease. Then Lord Viṣṇu reappeared before him and granted a boon. Thereupon, the king sought for relieving his son of the scourge of leprosy and to grant him sound health. Thereupon, Lord Viṣṇu told the king that his son was in his previous birth the king Meghavāhana, who was well-versed in all Śāstras and endued with wide knowledge and discrimination. Once accidentally he had to kill a Brahmin paramour, who entered his harem to rob off the virtue of the ladies in the harem. Later, the king could realise that he committed Brahminicide and was much grieved for having committed such a horrible sin. He installed his son as King and went to Benaras to perform penance and while observing severe austerity and penance he breathed his last there itself. Again, in his next birth he became his (Ambarīṣa's) son and the leprosy he was suffering from was the brand —a consequence of his sin attached to the Brahminicide.

On hearing the same, Ambarīṣa again and again begged the Lord Viṣṇu persuasively and prevailed upon him to relieve his son from the dreadful disease. Thus implored by the king,

over and again, Viṣṇu taken to pity, invoked the river Ganges. Then the river sprang there itself through a pit. Viṣṇu wanted the king to make his son have a dip in the water to get himself and his sins—major and minor—relieved and cured of the disease.

Accordingly, the king brought his son and made him bathe in those holy waters. Immediately his son became leprosy-ridden and effulgent like the rising Sun. Paying homage to Lord Viṣṇu, both Ambarīṣa and his son left for their palace. Immediately, Viṣṇu covered that pit lest it should be known to others. The water in the pit of Ganges was endued with the efficacy of sanctifying. The concealed spring of the Ganges was again revealed after being dug by the face of a cow in the following circumstances.

Once there was a cowherd in the Camatkārapura, who was attacked by leprosy. On one Ekadaśī day, a fold of cows came on the way where the boy was, while the Moon was at the constellation of Citra and the Sun was at Vṛṣa, one cow from the herd saw a green grass stalk from a distance and went there. With her teeth she upturned the grass stalk and dragged it and along with the stump of the grass there came out the hidden spring (of Ganges). Then the cow chewed the grass and drank that water to its heart's content. The pit became a pond in course of time. The leper cowherd also, when once he was thirsty, happened to enter the pond and bathe therein and came out taking water out of the pond and to his immeasurable surprise he found himself relieved of the disease and blessed with the effulgence of twelve Suns put together. He went to his abode and announced the incident to all the people. And all the people had a bath in the pond and became sanctified and visited, the abode of Gods. The holy place from that day became famous as Gomukhatīrtha because, it sprang by the touch of the face of the cow.

Kapila Tirtha[7]

King Suprabha, a mighty ruler went into the forest for hunting one day. Consequent on his killing a deer with his arrow, while she was suckling her young one, the mother deer

cursed the king to become a carnivorous tiger. Thereupon the king made adequate amends for his hasty act, and prayed for mercy. Then the deer told him that he would be relieved of the curse by a cow by name Kapilā after a century. The king was immediately transformed into a cruel tiger.

A herd of cows from a nearby stall used to graze in the forest. Among them was the cow, Kapilā, a beautiful one. Accidently when she entered into the thick forest, she came across the tiger one day. Knowing that she would become prey to the tiger, she was sad of the fate of her young one, with none to nurse it. When questioned by the tiger for the cause of her lamentation the cow told him that she was not sorry for her sake but for the sake of her young one tied in the cattle-pen, who survived only on her milk in its tender age, and sought for permission to allow her go to her young one and entrust it to her friends, to be looked after by them and to volunteer herself as prey to him on return. The tiger was not yieldy, whereupon, she vowed that the worst of sins would befall to her lot in case she broke her promise. She said that she would become target to the consequences of the sin of salughtering a Brahmin or a cow, or of kicking a Brahmin or cow on fire or that of obstructing one from donating in charity any gifts to others and the like accused and detestable acts. On hearing this, the tiger at last let the cow go on condition that she should return forthwith after entrusting her young calf to her friends, with lending her ear to the advice that would be doled out by her friends telling that if one breaks one's oaths made in crises, especially concerned with ladies, matrimony, protection of cow or at the time of death or peril, it would not tantamount to a sin at all.

The cow shedding tears with heavy heart lowed pitiously as she approached her calf. Seeing its mother in utter distress, the calf enquiringly asked its mother as to the cause for her agony. After allowing the calf to drink milk from her, Kapilā revealed her predicament and the necessity to volunteer herself before the tiger immediately. The calf felt and dejected on hearing the same and it felt that it was better to die than live without mother, prevailed on its mother to grant it permission to accompany her. But the loving Kapilā, could not brook

for a while the thought of her calf becoming prey to the tiger along with her and so dissuaded it from doing so but advised it to follow certain things after her death. Kapilā met her friends and told them of her vow and requested them to look after her young one. Despite the goadings given by her friends, not to surrender herself to the tiger for the sake of her word, Kapilā was unmoved. She knew pretty well that breaking a vow for the sake of saving a noble soul would be in the fitness of one's worthiness but not for the sake of one's own self. The whole universe centres round the Truth, the ocean is not transgressing its limit, the Emperor Bali still lives in the nether lands after gifting away his entire earth to Lord Viṣnu, though hoodwinked, the mountain Vindhya sticks to her height—all because of abiding truth and nothing but truth. The Heaven (Salvation) and the Dharma and everything rests on the consecrated words of truth. A person bereft of truth in his mind, speech and act is sure to be devoid of all. The fruits of even thousand horse-sacrifice fall into insignificance when compared to the merits of being truthful. Even a wretched Brahmin attains salvation by strict adherence to Truth, it being higher and nobler than the severe tapas and great learning. Faith unto Truth, even at odds and ordeals, with preparedness to face the test of the time, though fraught with difficulties, is a commendably worthy pratice on a spiritual aspirant to obtain everlasting bliss. Truth is the very treasure-trove of one's family, superior to all stages of man—Brahmacarya, Gārhastya, Vānaprastha and Sanyāsa. On hearing these, the friend of Kapilā could recognise how true Kapilā was to her word and they were all-praise of her and in their admiration of her unflinching faith unto Truth, blessed her that her soul shall have a permanent abode in the regions of Gods and Demons, prepared to sacrifice herself only to keep up her word. Kapilā prayed to the forest deities to take care of her young one and approached the tiger self-surrendering as a prey to him. To her surprise, she saw her calf also present there having pursued her. So, Kapilā requested the tiger first to devour her and then her calf. The tiger unable to contain himself with the truthfulness of the cow told her that it was for testing her that he let her go in the first instance, as otherwise, he would have, as his fellow-being devoured her on

the spot itslf deaf to her entreaties. Impressed by her true and sacrificing nature, the tiger let off both the cow and her calf go free. Immediately on permitting them go, the tiger transformed himself into his real figure as King Suprabha, relieving of the curse. He then requested the cow to ask for a favour from him, grateful as he is for relieving him of his accursed beastly life. The cow told him that as she was thirsty she wanted some water. Immediately the king made a pit on the earth with his bow and arrow wherefrom sprang out water and in that water the cow Kapilā bathed and quenched her thirst. In the meanwhile, the God of Dharma approached and conferred on the Kapilā a boon. Kapilā sought for celestial regions to her and the King Suprabha and that place to be known as Kapilatīrtha after her name. Those who perform obsequial rites of manes there are sure to obtain the reward of bestowing all varieties of gifts. Ablution in that sacred pool is also meritorious—particularly when done on the fourteenth day of any fortnight—it being sin-cleansing and wish-yielding.

The Holy Nrga Kupa[8]

Nṛga, a munificent king was popular for his countless valuable gift-giving in the shape of select-cows with gold horns, well-decked with silver hoofs, along with their respective calves— got from reliable sources and honest means. He had always an eye to comb out the cows of the best type capable of yielding milk with all the virtues and characteristics prescribed by the Scriptures. He was lavish in distributing his riches to others in the form of gifts of gold, garments, land, etc.

Despite his diligent, care, unawares a cow belonging to a Brahmin by name Jaimini crept into the fold of the king's herd. In good faith and unaware of the fact that Jaimini's cow had joined his fold, he made a gift of the said cow to another Brahmin. While being taken by the donee, Jaimini the owner of the cow identified the cow as belonging to him and questioned as to how his cow came to his hands. Thereupon, the donee-Brahmin told him that cow was gifted by King Nṛga. So both of them went to the king. Jaimini accused the king for having stolen his cow and gifted the same away to another Brahmin.

Then alone the king could understand the mistake on his part and as such an act though done by an accident, being fraught with devoiding him of his virtues, he expressed his regrets for his mistake under the peculiar circumstances and by way of amends offered Jaimini and the other Brahmin (donee) a lakh of excellent cows if the cow is given to him in order to save him from the grave impiety attached to the gift of a cow belonging to another. Both the Brahmins were unyieldy and obstinate and insisted on the very cow alone uncompromisingly. The disgruntled Brahmins left the palace without accommodating the wish of the king.

On death, the Yamadutas took the king to Yamaloka. When Yama enquired the king whether he wanted to suffer the consequences of his sin first or enjoy the fruits of his good deeds first, the king represented that he would invite the sufferings for his sins first before aspiring for the fruits of his good deeds. Suddenly he turned himself into a lizard. After some time when Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared before the lizard, the king in the form of lizard begged for pardon and requested his mercy and grant of redemption from the well promising unflinching faith unto Him ever and so saying he, after circumambulating Śrī Kṛṣṇa, prostrated before Him. The All-Mercriful Lover of Devotees taken to pity on the lot of the king, gave him a lift in His Car bound to celestial region.

From this it will be seen that the fruits of one's deed is to be reaped by one—whether done consciously or unconsciously. In the instant case, for want of proper vigilance on the part of the king's men, the cow of Jaimini got into the fold of the king's herd and the king gifted her in good faith taking her as his own, little knowing that it belonged to Jaimini. He could not get away scotfree for the vicarious sin attached to that gift and he meekly had to endure the sufferings in hell, despite his pious and pure heart to gift honestly select and useful cows for the benefit of the donee and despite his countless number of gifts and charitable disposition of mind.

The well in which King Nṛga lived to suffer the consequences of his sin named after him as Nṛgakūpa. The performance of obsequies and gift of decorated cow along with a calf there is considered meritorious. A Brahmin who so much as takes a

bath with the well water becomes purified and qualified to attain the merit of cow gift.

Gautami[9]

Once sage Gautama's disciples went to fetch water for their preceptor from a nearby lake. There arose some heated arguments and altercations between them and the wives of the other sages in the locality when the latter happened to speak ill of. Wounded by the carping remarks made by the wives of the other sages, the disciples reported what transpired between them and the wives of other sages at the lake but the wife of the preceptor never took their words to her head anything more than sportively. She went to the same lake to fetch water to her husband, Gautama.

On seeing the cool and unperturbed state, the ladies belonging to the other sages, who thought of being provoked or retorted, were disappointed to the top of their bent, inasmuch as the wife of Gautama not even so much as talk to them, apart from putting up an offended looks. Then the spouses of the sages hit upon a plan to sow seeds of dissension between the other sages and Gautama taunted them by carrying tales. The sages in a body made up their mind to wreak vengeance upon the Gautama-couple, and began performing severe penance in propitiation of Lord Gaṇeśa. Being pleased with their penance, Gaṇeśa appeared before them, whereupon the sages requested Him to humiliate the sage Gautma somehow or other. Lord Gaṇeśa tried to win them over by bringing to their minds how Gautama saved them from perishing when a great famine spread the land and telling them that it would not be fair on their part to think of doing harms to a saviour who came to their succour in calamity. But the sages were adamant and obstinate and would not heed the maxim set by Him.

Having no other go, in order just to please his devotees, Gaṇeśa transformed himself into a decrepit old useless cow and began to graze away the crop in the field of Gautama. Gautama on return to his hermitage noticed the cow's misdeed. With a view to drive her away the benevolent Gautama tried to goad the cow with grass stalks; but alas when Gautama thus obtructed

the cow with the grass stalk to the sudden surprise and chagrin the cow fell dead on the spot. Gautama felt compunction for his hasty act of obstructing the cow, which ended in the death of a cow, and he became targeted to the gravest sin attached to the slaughter of a cow. He went on consulting other sages the course open to him to get rid of the sin. But the sages in a body decried him telling that he is not even worthy of showing his face to anybody, as a sinner of cow slaughter is to be despised and shunned by everybody and therefore advised him to revive the cow. They said that the one who sees the face of a cow-slaughterer is also afflicted with the sin unless he expiates the sin communicated to him by taking a dip in holy waters immediately. They therefore said that they would not accept his hospitality any more unless he got himself relieved of the abominable sin.

In order to relieve him of the sin of cow-slaughter, the sages prescribed that he should circumambulate the Earth thrice and observe the Vow of 'Masavrata' (vow for a period of one month) and later circumambulate the Brahmagiri one hundred one times; or in the alternative, he has to bring the Holy Ganges and bathe in it; or as a third course they suggested he should make one crore Śivalingas and worship them and go round the Brahmagiri eleven times and bathe with fifty pot-ful water. Then only he would become purified.

Gautama preferred the last course suggested and making a crore of Śivalingas, he began worshipping them, taking the assistance of his wife and disciples. Lord Śiva, being propitiated with the worship of Gautama appeared before him and revealed how he was entrapped by the sages to undergo the austerities and at his behest, the spring of Ganges (offered by Brahma to Śiva) bathed Gautama to be washed off the sin of cow-slaughter.

The Ganges from that day onwards became renowned as Gautamī (the daughter of Gautama) with the efficacy of sanctifying even the gravest sinners.

Nrga Well[10]

A king by name Nṛga offered a cow of a Brahmin to another

Brahmin and consequently he was born as a lizard and fell into a well for a period of 4 yugas. At last Śrīkṛṣṇa rescued him from that plight. Indeed Nṛga was one of the greatest donors. That well in which he fell is named after him. A person who makes a gift of a cow there according to ritual undoubtedly will be relieved of the sin that is committed in millions of births.

Gomeda Continent[11]

The description given in Yuktikalpataru is referred to in the Vācaspatyam. It tells how once a king by name Gopati (lord of many cows) arranged the performance of a Go-Sava sacrifice, wherein Bhṛgu officiated as the priest. Gotama's imprecation upon Gopati killed Gopati and his curse burnt away his cattle that stayed in the sacrificial altar in the shape of a blaze. The fat of the burnt cows flowed over the earth and hence that continent came to be known as Gomeda (cow-fatty place).

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1. R.V., 8-24-30, reference may be made to India in the Vedic age, p. 67.
2. M.B. (Anu.), Chapter 66 verses 42, 43.

2a. Megha Sandesa, Canto 1 verse 49 and commentary of Mallinatha.

3. P.P. (Srsti), Chapter 18.
4. S.P. Part 2, Sub-Part 2, Chapter 20.
5. S.P. Part 3 (3), Chapter 27, verses 1 and 45.
6. S.P. Nagara, Chapter 93.
7. S.P. Prabhasa (3), Chapter 29.
8. *Ibid.* Prabhasa Part 4, Chapter 10.
9. Siva Purana, Part 4, Chapters 25 and 26.
10. G.S. (Dwaraka), Chapter 15 verses 9 to 15.
11. Vācaspatyam (Gomeda).

12

Conclusion

The cow has a very important role to play not only in the religious life of a devout Hindu, but also in the economic and social life of all Indians right from the vedic age down to the modern times. The cow appears to be the most useful of all the animals from time immemorial.

Manu found Ghee as a sacrificial substance and to produce it he, by the grace of Mitra and Varuṇa, got the animal in a bovine form. Hence the cow was produced for the realisation of Ghṛta for sacrificial purpose during the vedic period. The cow is called Ghee-footed. Prajāpati first produced fire and for his propitiation offered Ghee-oblations with Svāhā. Later all the gods were created and they found the Sāman in the cow. Agni is said to have united with her and produced milk. Milk is indeed the seed of Agni. Hence milk is resplendent like Agni and it is warm even at the time of milking as it happens to be the seed of Agni.

Surabhi, the mother of bovine species, was the daughter of Dakṣa. She was produced by him by belching after taking nectar. She gave birth to Nandinī by her connection with Kaśyapa. She was capable of granting all wishes. She was obtained by Āpava for his sacrificial purposes. Another version in the Mahābhārata and all the Purāṇas describe that Surabhi was produced when the great ocean was churned. While the Padma Purāṇa elevates her and speaks of her origin along

with the Vedas the Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa speaks of her origin from Kṛṣṇa's body.

Many varieties of cows and their special features have been discussed here. The synonyms of cow and bull have been listed in this work. Usrā, Usriyā, Dughā, Dhenā and Dhenu are the synonyms of the word cow. Māheyī, Saurabheyī, Gauḥ, Usrā, Mahā, Sṛṅgiṇī,, Arjunī, Aghnyā and Rohiṇī are the synonyms in classical literature. It is interesting to note that the herd of cows, Gokula is known as Godhana. Acandi is the name of a Pusillanimous cow. Idā, Aditi, Sarasvati, Devayāna, Gharmadhuk, Ranti, Havya Kāmya, Candra, Jyoti, Mahi, Viśṛti—are the epithets of a cow. Aghnyā is the epithet of a milch-cow. It is interesting to note that the word Vasūni refers to cows as they are rich in milk.

The bull was regarded as the symbol of strength. Since vedic period it has been helping to draw the cart and plough and hence its name Anadvāh. The bull Nīla is the very embodiment of Īśwara and his particular description is discussed herein in detail.

Since the vedic times the cow has been serving mankind in several ways. The usefulness of cow is apparent as the giver of milk, the producer of bullocks, the supplier of manure to fields; and even after death all her parts are useful. The cows were treated as one's treasure in ancient India by the Āryans. Particularly every family should have reared a cow known as Agnihotrī for sacrificial purposes. This is the epithet of such cows as are meant for sacrificial purposes to propitiate the daily fire-sacrifice. During the period of Barter cows were the primary form of wealth. The Soma plant was purchased exchanging cows for a definite measure of it. The word 'pecus' or 'pecu', ancient Romans use is the same as 'paśu', which is the time-old term of the vedic period. 'Impecunious' and 'pecuniary' the English words are stated to have been derived from the latin word 'pecus'.

The story of Hariścandra is a fitting example to prove that the cow played a prominent role in the barter system in the vedic period.

The words 'śataguḥ' (one possessing hundred cows) and 'sahasraguḥ' (one possessing thousand cows) appearing in

Smṛti literature and even in later literature proves that possession of cows was considered as possession of wealth.

The performance of sacrifices was obligatory on the owners of the cow. Even in ancient India the kings as well the owners of cows used to donate innumerable cows to Brahmin priests for the performance of sacrifices and as rewards for their successful performance. Among the donors of cows in the vedic period the names of Rājā Ṛṇancaya, Sṛtaratha, Bhauma, king Taranta, Aśvatha, Asaṁga, Sūdaḥ are to be mentioned. Even the name of Bṛbu, a carpenter should be mentioned here as though he was considered a low caste person, belonging to paṇis at that time, he was praised by the sage Śaṁyu for his liberality. The imperative duty of donating cows to Brahmin priests and the sin consequent on not doing so, is elaborately referred to in the Atharvaveda. Śrī Rāma, Bhagīratha, Śibi, Gaya, Rantideva, Yudhiṣṭhira and a host of other kings of old donated according to the ritual, cows in large numbers and as a result attained to blissful regions at death.

Animal sacrifices were performed even in the vedic period to propitiate the gods and the cow was no exception. However the milch-cow was exempted and it was styled as Aghnyā i.e., that which ought not to be killed. Āpastamba in his gṛhyasūtras (1.3.10) clearly states that there are three occasions for killing a cow : 1) when a guest is received, 2) at the time of obsequies, and 3) on the marriage occasion. From the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and the Taittirīya Saṁhitā it is known that the ritual relating to the cremation of the dead, required the slaughter of a cow named Anustāraṇī.

Kṛṣṇa-loka is identified with Goloka and the donors of cows and other meritorious persons who serve cows with reverence would go there. It is the supreme destination whence there is no return to this mortal world.

Medicinal values of the milk of cow and its by-products have been held highly useful for human sustenance. Even in the Ṛgveda the cow is praised as the navel of Ambrosia, Amṛtasyanābhiḥ, and the Ghee as the semblance of Ambrosia, Amṛtasya Cakṣaṇam. The Soma juice mixed with milk is referred to as the delicious drink meant for Indra and other gods. Dadhyāśir, the Soma juice mixed with curd, is described

as the special beverage of Indra. It is stated in the Atharvaveda that cows yield delicious milk by feeding them with the sap of tender plants. The celestial cow, Surabhi's foam of milk is the very nectar. Her milk is useful to Nāgas forefathers and deities. Even Indra states that the milk of cow is equal to nectar. Vasiṣṭha by taking the milk of Nandinī could remain unblemished in youth for ten thousand years.

In the absence of mother-milk, cow-milk may be given to children. From Āyurveda we know the utility of cow-products. Without the application of cow-products generally drugs cannot be purified. Even the urine of cows is the best of all purifiers. Cow dung acts as a medicine for the human beings. One who takes pañcagavya is purified from all his sins. The Garuḍa Purāṇa enumerates the qualities of the cow products in the preparation of medicines, that are potent in curing many diseases such as Oedema, Ocular diseases, abdominal colic of pregnant women, pthisis, leucoderma, spleen enlargement, piles etc. Even according to the modern view, the milk of cow is considered conducive to one's intellect, complexion and duration of life. It can cure the disorders of all the three humours. Milk is good for all persons, infants as well as infirm and old persons. Even butter milk is glorified. It is stated that by taking butter milk, one will never get displeasure or disease. The diseases which are once cured by butter-milk will never recur. Just as ambrosia is for deities, so is butter milk for human beings. Cow urine is the best curer of cutaneous infections.

In the Ṛgveda the cow is described as 'The mother of Rudras, the daughter of Vasus, the Sister of Ādityas, the very fountain of Ambrosia'. It is held by the vedic seers, that the enlightened should not kill the cow which is a pious descendant of Aditi. In a Riddle in the Yajurveda it is stated that the cow is greater than either the sun, sea or earth, as the cow supplies the elements of sacrifice, and sacrifice is the root cause of all the things that are created.

Cow-slaughter has been prohibited in the Ṛgveda in very concrete terms and the punishment for such a crime has been mentioned in the Atharvaveds. As the cow was regarded as a member of the family itself the one who killed a cow, it was held, should be done to death by the members of the family

as a whole.

The sanctity of Ghṛta is described in the Ṛgveda. In the Atharvaveda the sacrificial cow and the sacrificial bull are eulogised in glorious terms. Many times the cows are said to have performed severest penance to propitiate Brahma or Īśwara and they attained purification. They are sure to get salvation in one birth. Their horns are very sacred. To get horns they performed severe penance.

Even the scratching, touching, seeing of the cow—all these acts are purifiers, then what to speak of protection of the cows ! They are mothers of the entire universe and the bulls are fathers. Since Ṛgvedic times ancient seers strove for the well being of the cows. Bharadvāja was against cow-killing and in unequivocal terms attached a special sanctity to the cow by identifying her with the gods. In the Atharvaveda there are many hymns in the form of benedictions of even the cattle-pen, as also for the curing of disea ses of bulls etc.

Pṛthu the great ruler of old constructed hamlets for cow-herds and cow-sheds for cows. From this one may easily infer the sanctity of the cow and the necessity for cow-protection.

When cow-killing came to be prohibited strictly from the post-vedic period, this practice probably changed into the sacred rite of Vṛṣotsarga (letting loose the bull) and godāna (gift of cows). Even many kings in the vedic period were distinguished for their donations of cows to Brahmins who performed sacrifices for the welfare of the nation.

Ever since the vedic-period, to save their wealth i.e. cows, the prohibition of cow-slaughter has been linked up with economic considerations, which is still observed by a number of Hindus. Even though the Mahābhārata strictly prohibited cow-slaughter or bull-slaughter, the main object lesson was preached by Kṛṣṇa in the Bhāgavata when he strictly prohibited animal sacrifice for the propitiation of Indra and demonstrated a new sacrifice of cow-worship. The main purpose of his incarnation was considered to be the same. Many a time he protected cows from evil spirits just as Indra did in the Vedic period.

Not only the ancient seers but even the enlightened intellectuals of our age like Gandhi and Satishchandra Das Gupta believe that a nation which approves cow slaughter, will not

progress economically. It is surprising to note that Gandhiji laid more stress on the issue of cow-protection rather than on the removal of foreign rule from India. Gupta and Gandhiji collected experts' opinions and elaborately demonstrated and proved the superiority of cow milk to buffalo milk.

It is declared by Cyavana in the presence of Nahuṣa that he could proclaim only a fraction of the greatness of the cow but he could not exhaust the subject.

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Index

A

Abbeys, 6
Abhaya, 168
Abortion, 171
Acandi, 17
Ācarya, 33
Aditi, 8,17,210
Āditya, 16,17,212
Affluence, 196,199
Aghnyā, 6,17,57,186,209
Agni, 11 to 14,55,62,64,73,186
Agnidh, 210
Agnihotrī, 55
Agnipurāṇa, 16,81,85,188,191
Agniṣṭoma, 7,56
Agre, 12
Agriculture, 42, 45, 55, 192, 195, 199, 202
Agri, 12
Agriculturist, 8,32
Āhavanīyā, 55,210
Airāvata. 242
Ajīgarta, 33,210,211
Ākāśa, 211
Alkali, 168
Amarakośa, 11
Ambrosia, 8,32,175,193
Aṁgas, 65
Amino Acids, 177
Amṛta, 32,38
Amritamahal, 26
Amṛtasar, 25
Aṁsu, 17
Amūrtarāya, 64
Anaḍvān, 20
Anaemia, 178
Anāha, 170
Anasarca, 170
Ancestors, 77
Ancient India, 1
Anger, 77
Aṅgīrasa, 11,17,32,62,185
Animal, 1,11,74
Antardhāna, 16
Antidote, 173,174
Anuśāsanikapārva, 2
Anustāraṇī, 56,57,261
Apatoka, 17
Apava, 14,217
Appetiser, 172,173
Apphrodisiac, 168,172 to 174
Apsarasas, 67,69,70
Arbuda, 64
Aries, 73
Ariṣṭanemi, 17

Argentina, 45
Arghā Ceremony, 33
Arka, 169
Arjunī, 17
Arṣabbya, 20
Aruṇā, 22
Asaṅga, 62
Ash, 5
Asia, 33
Aṣṭaka, 35
Āstāra, 13
Asuras, 32
Aśvagandha, 168
Aśvamedhaparva, 2
Aśvins, 7
Aśvattha, 62
Atharvan, 62
Atharva Veda, 1,2,3,7,14,20,62
Atirātra, 7
Attock, 26
Autumn, 169,173
Aukṣakam, 20
Australia, 28
Awankari, 26
Āyoda, 216
Āyurveda, 5,194

B

Babhṛ, 19,61,69
Bacteria, 5
Bahulā, 79
Bahusūtiḥ, 17
Bairat, 23
Bal, 180
Balīvarda, 20
Barley, 56,187,198
Barron Cow, 7
Barter System, 2,32,56
Baṣkayinī, 17
Battle, 76
Beatitude, 78
Beef, 7,194,195
Belching, 14
Benargee, 180
Bengal 26 to 28
Bhadra, 20
Bhaga, 17,186,187
Bhagalpore, 27
Bhagīratha, 72
Bhāgavata, 15
Bharadwāja, 186
Bharata Khaṇḍa, 81
Bhauma, 61,185
Bhavitavyā, 80
Bhinata, 22
Bihar, 27
Bikaner, 24
Bile, 171 to 173
Bipeds, 16
Bitch, 31
Blanket, 69
Bliss, 3
Boat, 66
Bombay, 46
Bombay Presidency, 25,28
Bone, 18
Bovinespecies, 1,15,17,190,196
Boz Tanrus, 22
Brahmagavī, 2
Brahmacarya, 66
Brahman, 14,15,82,193
Brahmaloka, 198
Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, 2,15
Brāhmi, 168,169
Brahmin, 1,2,5,6,15,33 to 36,54,57,58, 63 to 66,68,70 to 80,81,82,85
Brahmaṇas, 2,14
Brahmaṇī Bulls, 26,57
Bṛbu, 62
Breeding, 45
Bṛhspati, 62,79
Bride, 33,34,70
Bridegroom, 56,69
Brindled Cow, 62,63
Bronze, 67
Brown 68,70,71,75
Bruen, 46
Buffalo, 8,17,22,31,45 to 47,180,181, 203
Bulgaria, 117
Bull, 6,7,17,20,21,23,27,28,34,35,61, 64 to 66,69 to 71,74,79,85,197,199, 203,217

Bull-Sacrifice, 7
Bullock, 8, 24 to 28,42,46,56,58,85, 192,202,203
Butcher, 198
Butter, 12,24,32,37,56,70,173,180

C

Cake, 216
Cākṣuṣa, 17
Calcium, 178
Calcium Phosphorus, 178
Calcutta, 26
Calf or Calves, 4,6,15,17,35,41,48,64 to 66, 68,69,72,74,76,78,79,82,83, 175,176,178,179,181,186, 190, 192, 199,201,203,205,216
Calicut, 23
Caṅḍālas, 58,195
Cāndrāyaṇa, 191
Candre, 18
Capric, 179
Caprylic, 179
Cart, 20,24,26
Cārucampaka, 22
Caste, 82
Cattle, 24,25,27,31 to 37,44,45,56, 58, 61 to 63
Caturhāyanī, 17
Cāturmāsya, 4
Catuṣpād, 1
Cave, 11
Celestial Cow, 1
C. Maidan, 70
C. Tree, 66
Central India, 22
Central Provinces, 24
Central Statistical Bureau, 44
Ceremony, 203
Chants, 1,13
Charity, 2,77,82,84
Chavya, 168
Children, 3,174
Chinnā, 168
Citra, 67
Citraratha, 65
Civilization, 1,2
Clarified Butter, 85
Cloud, 66,70,187
Coin, 33
Coinage, 33
Colour, 68
Copper, 178
Conversions, 5
Cosmetics, 169
Cost, 70
Cotton Seeds, 172
Cowpen, 5
Cowshed, 6,84,188,192
Cowslaughter, 197
Creation, 8,12,14,16
Creator, 1,14,15
Cremation, 57
Crore, 37,42 to 45,64
Cultivation, 48
Cultivator, 180
Culture, 31
Cupid, 169
Curd, 1,5,32,37,55,56,70
Custom, 70
Cutaneous Affection, 170,173
Cyavana, 38

D

Dadhi, 32
Dadhyāśir, 32
Dairy Farm, 46,181,200,202
Dakṣa, 14 to 17,38,217
Dam, 48
Damsels, 64
Damya, 20
Dāna, 2
Darsapūrṇamāsa, 56
Daśaratha, 64
Das, Tandon, 41
Daughter, 14,15,17,41,193
Death, 12,13,75
Deccan, 23
Deities, 1,2 to 7,22,30,40,55,62,63,66, 67,76,193,199
Delhi, 24

Demons, 15,54,55
Denmark, 45
Descendants, 77
Devadāru, 1˙0
Devas, 17
Devotees, 4
Devotion, 41,81,193
Dhanada, 22
Dhanni, 26
Dhanyu, 168
Dhaumya, 216,217
Dharma, 2,6,17,21
Dharmada, 22
Dharmaśāstras, 3
Dhāruṇa, 20
Dhāta 17
Dhēna, 17
Dhenu, 17,18
Dhṛtarāṣṭra, 215
Dhumrā, 19,28
Dhurvahā, 20
Diabetes, 6
Diarrohea, 46,171,176
Digester, 173
Dilīpa, 41,68,201,229
Dirghanāsa, 22
Dirgha Śṛṅga, 22
Disciple, 3,67
Disease, 6,171
Dityavāhah, 21
Dityavāt, 20
Donations, 1,61,72
Donor, 40,61,64,66,70,74,76, 77 to 79,82 to 90
Dower, 74
Draught, 42,47,56,192,209,210
Dṛhyu, 186
Droṇakṣīra, 18
Droṇas, 18
Dṛtikaṅṭham, 21
Dugdha-Kuṇḍa, 8
Dughā, 17
Duhitā, 16
Dung, 5,37,41,43,44,195,198
Durviṣahyā, 22
Duryodhana, 215
Duṣyanta, 65
Dvihāyanī, 17
Dwāpara, 63,82
Dyau, 38,217
Dysentery, 171,175

E

Eagle, 196
Earth, 3,11,12,38,63,64,66,67,73,76, 78,81,85,86,199
East, 13,213
Eclipse, 73
Economics, 31,41
Economist, 8
Egoism, 76
Ekadaśī, 3,4
Ekadhurīṇā, 20
Ekahayanī, 17
Elephant, 3,22,64,65
Emperor, 41
Enemy, 84
England, 43
English, 27,33,78,260
Enzymes, 177
Epilepsy, 171,174,175
Éśwara, 8
Eunuch, 84
Euridition, 82
Europe, 33
Exchange, 32,33
Expiation, 84
Eye, 11,14

F

Fame, 71
Family, 16,32 to 34
Famine, 53,75
Farming, 202
Father, 70,79,84
Fear, 77
Felicity, 78
Filial debt, 8
Fire, 1,3,6,12 to 15,32,36,66,67,73
Fish, 38
Five-Year-Plan, 42
Flesh, 7

Food, 9,13,14,32,35,39,42,66,78,8
Forest, 58
Fortune, 5,14
Fragrance, 14
Friend, 15,33
Fuel, 9

G

Gajadaṁsa, 196
Galapiñgalā, 19,69
Gambling, 78
Gandharvas, 69-70
Gandhi Mahatma, 8
Gaṇeśa, 255
Gañgā, 81
Ganges, 70,256
Garbhādhāna, 34
Garuḍapurāṇa, 3,81
Gas-plant, 44
Gauḥ, 2,11,17
Gaurapiñgalā, 19,69
Gautama, 212,255,256
Gautamī, 255,256
Gavahnika, 6
Gayā, 64,65,139
Gāyatrī, 13,84,139
Gaynee, 23
Gemini, 73
Gems, 69,81
Ghee, 1,4,5,8,12,39,41,46,54,66,67,71, 173,179,180,185,198
Ghosts, 6
Ghṛta, 85
Ghṛtadhenu, 19
Ghṛta Tīrtha, 8
Gift, 32,36,37,56 to 58,62 to 64,66 to 68,70,72 to 85,193
Gir, 25
Giver, 83,84
Go, 13,17,20,67,187
Goat, 14,56
Gobar-gas, 8
Gōdāna, 34,67
Godbole, 177
Goddess, 7,39,41
Gōdhanam, 17
Godhuma, 169
Gods, 2,7,12,13,15,32,35,54 to 55,63, 67
Gokṣura, 169
Gokulam, 17
Gold, 3,15,35,56,64,66 to 68,71,73,77 80,81
Gōlōka, 4,9,15,22,140
Gomal, 23
Gomatī, 40,245
Gomati-Mantra, 149,158
Gōmēdha, 7,245
Gōmithunam, 35
Gomukhatirtha, 249
Goorgaira, 25
Gōpalak Sangh, 46
Gōpas, 58,212
Gōpāreśwara, 8
Gopāṣtami, 193
Gōpati, 20
Gopicandana, 243
Gorocana, 139
Gośati, 2
Gosevaks, 45
Gosevasangh, 45
Gotra, 212
Govardhanapuja, 193
Government, 44,46,47,202
Govrata, 76,142,158,198
Gowra, 22
Gowramukhī, 22
Gowrī, 19
Grahaṇi, 175
Grahāpasmāra, 168
Grass, 172,179,190,195,198,203,205
Grazing, 203
Griṣma, 173
Groom, 33
Gudūcī, 167,169
Guggulu, 170,188

H

Hades, 6
Haemoglobin, 178

Hāsa, 22
Haṁsika, 38
Hansi, 24
Hariscandra, 33,210
Hāridrā, 22
Haritaki, 170
Harm, 230
Haryana, 24
Havanī, 55
Havi or Havis, 1,39,40
Havya, 18,37,38
Havirdhāna, 16
Havirdhānī, 15
Health, 172,196,203
Heaven, 2,3,5,6,11,56,64 to 67,70,72, 79 to 81,83,85,191,194,195,197,198, 213
Hell, 3,5,6,8,64,66,83,85, 189 to 193, 196,197
Hemanta, 173
Herd, 186
Hide, 8,57
Hiṁsa, 7
Hindus, 1,2,5 to 7,33.34
Hinduism, 199,200
Hingu, 170
Hinguzera, 175
Hiraṇya Varṇa Piñgākṣi, 19
Hiraṇyadā, 22
Hiraṇyakeśin Gṛhyasūtra, 33
Hissar, 24,26,27
Honey, 56
Horse, 14,62,64
H. Power, 42
H. Sacrifice, 65
Huient Sang, 23
Humour, 171,172,174
Hundred, 2,36,40,43,62,65,70,72,76, 83,85,177,191,192,209,260
Hysteria, 168

I

Ida, 18
Idol, 98
Immolation, 131
Immortality, 128
Incest, 86
India, 1, 22 to 24, 26, 31,43,44,61,202 203,264
Indra, 7,22,32,35,62,67,68,93,94,122, 131,134,143,261,262
Indrāṇi, 131
Indras weapon, 11
Indus valley, 22
Industry, 45
Injury, 230
Insects, 78
Intellect, 167
Intestinal glands, 167
Inviolable, 18
Iron, 93,101
Īśwara, 15,22,116
Itchara, 20

J

Jabala, 212
Jagatī, 79
Jaggery, 89
Jaimini, 253
Jaladhēnu, 19
Jāleśwara tīrtha, 98
Jamadagni, 222,223,232
Jaṇaka, 211
Janārdana, 140
Jātavedas, 129,130
Jewels, 69,89,115
Jhelum, 26
Jihwā, 128
Jitavatī, 38,217
Jīvanmukta, 121
Jṛṁbhaṇa, 233
Juice, 33,168
Jupitor, 93
Jyēṣṭa, 152
Jyeṣṭapuṣkara, 85,100
Jyotē, 18

K

Kailāsa, 114,135

Kalaśa-sea, 15
Kalāvatī, 119
Kalevaram, 124
Kalhoḍitīrtha, 97
Kali, 64
Kalidasa, 3
Kali-age, 7,56,82
Kalpa, 94,100
Kalpalatā, 88
Kalpavṛkṣa, 88,119
Kāma, 14
Kāmadhenu, 1,8,14,37,89,96
Kāmadhuk, 14
Kāmini, 22
Kāmyakarmas, 56
Kamyāṣṭamī, 72,142
Kāmye, 18
Kaṁsa, 35
Kangayam, 26
Kankreji, 25
Kapha, 174
Kapilā, 2,3,5,18,19,21,66,68 to 70,72, 81,84,85,86,87,92,97,99,100,137
Karavīrā, 114
Kapiladhāra, 95
Kapilaṣaṣṭīvrata, 9
Kapola, 120
Karma, 124
Kārpasācala, 91
Kārtavīryārjuna, 88
Karkatakapāla, 169
Kārtīka, 1,94,95,142
Kāśa, 167
Kasmir, 23
Kaśyapa, 14,17,38, 64
Kaśyapa-Lake, 8
Katras, 23
Kaunteya, 116
Kaustubha, 15
Keepers, 63
Keśānta, 34
Kēśaram, 169
Ketu, 93
Kharavāta, 90
Khēta, 90
Khurapiñgalā, 19
Killing, 57
Kine, 32,33,39 to 41,58
King, 1,5,6,32,36,39, 61 to 65, 83,93, 139,140,156
Kinnaras, 24,120
Knowledge, 3,41,63,64,67,73,82,98, 121
Kohala, 72
Kṛchchrātikṛchchra, 158,141
Krchra, Santapana, 142
Krī, 32
Krishnavalley, 25
Kṛṣṇa, 4,15,19,113,114,116 to 119,121, 141,154
Kṛṣṇaa, 22,68
Kṛṣṇalōka, 116,117,261
Kṛṣṇa priyā, 119
Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, 94
Kṛta, 63,81,140
Krttikas, 130
Kṣatriya, 34,36,76,88,92,134-5
Kṣīra, 141
Kṣīradhēnu, 86
Kṣiraudanam, 32
Kubera, 68,87,154
Kuṅḍoghnī, 25
Kurukṣetra, 139
Kuśa, 141,145,154,167
Kuṣṭam, 167,168
Kūṣmāṅda, 168
Kuthywar, 25

L

Lake, 15,72,96,113,128
Lakhs, 37
Lakṣmaṇa, 143,168
Laṁbikā, 22
Land, 3,5,67,73,74,81,92,97
Lapislazuli, 90
Lavaṇa, 91
Law, 131
Leaves, 168
Leprosy, 174,177
Leucoderma, 166,262
Leucorrohea, 169
Lexicon, 11

Libations, 32,66,67,137,148
Liberation, 85
Libra, 73
Lice, 170
Life, 63,64
Life-breath, 67,84
Light, 3
Līlaṅga, 21,31
Lineage, 16
Lion, 114,228
Literature, 2,177
Lohita, 19,68
Lokamanya Tilak, 41
Lokapālas, 89
Loṇikā, 168
Longevity, 134,166,169,171,174,177
Lord Viṣṇu, 3
Lotuses, 114
Lover, 165
Luke warm, 166,168
Lunar, 73
Lute, 70

M

Macdonnel, 33
Mādhava, 99
Madhu, 86
Madhu parka, 33
Magadha, 16
Magha, 94
Mahā, 17
Mahā Bhārata, 1,2,6,14,15,38,40,41, 64,114,157
Mahā Bhūtaghaṭa, 88
Mahādānas, 88
Mahādēva, 6,134,153
Mahā Rudravnata, 94
Mahēndrasnānam, 138
Mahēśwara, 7,155
Māhēyī, 17
Mahī, 18
Mahodadhi, 15
Mahokṣa, 20
Maiden, 16
Mālati, 169,170
Malnutrition, 176
Manaśśila, 170
Māndhāta, 65,79
Māṅdhātṛ, 65
Manes, 72,87,96
Manojava, 14
Mantra, 1,40,79,84,137,139,158
Manthara, 15
Manu, 11,36,54,63,157
Manure, 8,43
M. Smrti, 3,35
Mārīṣā, 16
Marriage, 98
Maruts, 69,130]
Masilipatnam, 23
Massacre, 134
Mātā, 16,79
Maternity, 8
Mathura, 118
Matsya-Purāṇa, 88
Meat, 31
Meconium, 176
Medhya, 22
Medicinal Values, 165
Medicine, 5,166,167,171,174
Merit, 83,86,100
Merudanam, 91
Meums, 77
Milk, 1,4,5,8,12,13,15,18,23 to 28,31, 32,37,39,40,42,43,46 to 48,55,56, 58,61,62,64 to 69,74,75,80,81,83
Millions, 65 81,114
Mind, 14
Minerals, 177,178
Misery, 134,135
Misfortune, 135
Mitra, 12,54,130,131
Mohenzo Daro, 22
Money, 33,76
Monsoon, 173
Montgomery, 23 to 28,46
Mooltan, 25
Month, 71
Moon, 4,56,72,120,152
Moral, 84
Mother, 1,2,67,8,15,77,79
Mouth, 2,84

Mṛdvīka, 167
Mṛgā, 98
Mucukuṅda, 65
Music, 177
Myriads, 72
Myrobalan, 138
Mystic-vision, 155

N

Nābhi, 165
Naciketas, 72
Nāḍījaṅgha, 166,221,222
Nāgara, 170
Nāgas, 17,38,166,262
Nagaur, 22
Nāgavalā, 167
Nāgeśwara, 170
Nahuṣa, 39
Naicikī, 17
Naṅdā, 8,15,22,58,237
Nandanagarden, 15,67
Naṅdarāja, 37
Naṅdā Saraswatī, 248
Naṅdī, 89,231
Naṅdikeśwara, 89,231
Naṅdinī, 3,14,22,38, 41, 64, 214, 218, 223
Nārada, 134
Naratīrtha, 96
Nārāyaṇa, 81,243
Nārmadā, 8,22,134
Nation, 180,263
National Income, 44
Naval, 128,129,165
Necklet, 33
Nectar, 14,15,67
Nellore, 24
Neolithic-Age, 32
Nervous Disease, 168
Newzealand, 45
Night, 78
Nīlā, 21,22
Nīlī, 168
Niṁba, 169
Nirguṅḍi, 168
Niṣka, 33,64,65
Nitrogen, 43
Nivartanas, 90
Nomenclatures, 18,67
North Asia, 22
North Punjab, 26
Nourishment, 61
Nṛga, 65,218,253,254
Nṛgakūpa, 253,254
Nukra, 26
Nuptial Ceremony, 34
Nutrition, 43
Nymph, 69,115

O

Oblation, 7,55,56,58,129
Obsequies, 84
Ocular Diseases, 169
Oedema, 170
Offering, 12,56
Oil, 178,180
Old Ghee, 168,174
Omnipresent, 111
One, 71
Ongole, 24
Ordinance, 200
Origin, 11,12,14,15,22,53,68,114,140
Ornaments, 62,64,69,70,93
Oṣadhis, 235
Ox, 6,7,20,56,85,93
Oxen, 20,21,23,67,100,101,127
Oxidation, 180

P

Paddy, 66,67,91,101,149
Padma-Purāṇa, 1,2,3,15,80,227
Pajra, 62
Palāla, 68
Palāla Dhūmrā, 19,87
Pali, 16
Palam, 160

Palas, 80
Panacea, 174
Pañcagavya, 5,142,147,168,191,262
Pañcapallavas, 169
Paṅḍit, 40
Pāṅḍukaṁbala Varṇa, 19
Pānḍura, 21
Paṇis, 32,62,129,185
Pannagas, 154
Parakavrata, 191
Parameṣṭin, 130
Pāraskara, 34
Paraśurāma, 223
Parayatra, 23
Pārijāta, 14,15
Parjanya, 132,185,186
Pārśavya, 62
Parturition, 48
Pasture, 156
Paśu, 33
Pāṭala, 19
Paternal-deities, 8,69,155
Patient, 168,172
Patha, 169
Pathogenic Bacteria, 170
Patna, 27
Patriarch, 16
Paurāṇika, 89
Paurava, 64
Pāvakaḥ, 115
Pavamāna, 131
Payas, 32
Pāyasa, 58,71,153
Pāyu, 62
Peace, 4
Pearls, 114
Pecu, 33
Pecuniary, 33
Pecus, 33
Penance, 64,72,76,77,81,82,135
Penitent, 94,158
Pericardium, 131
Persian gulf, 23
Phlegm, 171 to 175
Phosphorus, 43,178
Piety, 2,6,7
Piles, 168
Piñga, 68
Pinjarapoles, 201
Pīnōdhnī, 18
Pippalī, 168
Piśācas, 73
Pitā, 79
Pitṛs, 191,235
Pitṛyajna, 56
Pitta, 171 to 174
Pīvarī, 19,69
Plants, 12
Playōgi, 62
Pleasures, 71
Plenty, 61
Plough, 20
Ploughing, 8,24,26,31
Poison, 15
Potassium, 26
Pothwar, 43
Prabhāvrata, 94
Prabhūvasu, 61
Pracetasas, 16,76
Prācinabarhi, 16
Pradāta, 80
Prahlāda, 88
Pramlōca, 16
Praṣṭhauhī, 17
Prāyaṇīyēṣṭi, 56
Pre-Aryan, 22
Preceptor, 41,75,76
Preservation, 31
Pretender, 77
Pre-Vedic, 31
Prēyasī, 18
Priyañgu, 145
Priests, 7,39,62,63
Progeny, 6,47,62,133,166,171,204
Prophylaxis, 169
Prosperity, 4,33,40,41,61,63,67,71,81, 93,94,133,159,190
Protection, 31,67,133
Protector, 135
Proteins, 175,177
Pṛthu, 88
Pthisis, 166,167
Puberty, 77
Pubescience, 77

Puchchapiñgalā, 19
Puddings, 171,176
Punarjanma, 166
Punarnavā, 168
Punjab, 24
Puṇyāhvacana, 89
Purāṇa, 2,81,82,84,85,86,87
Purchase, 78
Purgative, 171
Pūrṇimāvrata, 95
Puruṣa, 54,94
Puruṣottama Das Tandon, 41
Pusillanimous, 17
Pūṣan, 144
Puṣkara-Lakes, 72

Q

Quadruped 1,16,185
Quarter, 11

R

Race, 67
Rādha, 15
Radiance, 15
Raghu, 73,229
Raghuvaṁsa, 3,227
Rain, 66
Rāja, 16,261
Rājadharma, 221
Rājputhana, 22,24
Rājasūya, 16
Rajendraprasad, 41
Rākṣasa, 71
Rakta Pitta, 171,173,175
Raktapiñgākṣi, 19,69
Rāma, 64,261
Ramāyaṇa, 2,37
Rañte, 18,261
Rañtideva, 65,261
Rasātala, 38
Ratnahārin, 37
Raurava, 21
Rawalpindi, 26
Ray, 11,67
Rāyaṇa, 119
Receiver, 4,64,77,78,80,82,84,85
Recipient, 77
Red, 14,68
Refuge, 66,67
Region, 15,68,70,71,72,75,78
Religion, 81
Religious Rite, 7
Rèvatī, 67
Reverence, 77,261
Ṛgveda, 1,15,32,33,36,54,62,165
Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, 261,262
Ṛgvedic-Times, 31,32,33,53,54,61
Rheumatism, 173
Rice, 56,67
Riches, 41
Richness, 32
Riddle, 262
Right, 33
Ritual, 78,80,81,83,84,261
River 5,71,84,85
Ṛṇañcaya, 61,261
Robbers, 32
Rocksalt, 166,169
Rōhiṇī, 17,70,260
Rōhita, 33
Romans, 33
Royal, 83
Royal Commission, 42,54
Royal Community, 92
Ṛṣabha, 20
Ṛṣis 32,39
Rudras 1,8,16,17,262
Rusamas, 61

S

Śabalā, 2,10,37,87
Sabara, 62,127
Sabardughā, 18
Sacrifice, 2,4,7,11 to 13,15,16,34,41, 55 to 58,61,64,65,67,75,77,92,132, 134,135 to 138,150,151,157,165,
Sacrificer, 92,127
Sacrificial Fees, 33
Sadagativarata, 93
Sādhyas, 120,132,152,165
Saffron, 112

Sage, 3,5,15,21,22,32,36,37,39,41,61, 62,88,140, 143, 154, 158, 171, 185, 199,223,232,233,235,255,256
Sahasraguh, 2,36,40
Saindhavam, 167
Sakalapriyā, 22
Śakra, 17,100,215,231
Śakra Prastha, 230
Śakṛtkari, 17
Sale, 6,32
Salt, 197,198
Salvation, 85
Samaṁsamīna, 18
Sāman, 13
Samañgā, 79
Samāprasūtikā, 100
Samāvartaka 241
Samāvartana, 34
Sāmaveda, 211
Sambhu, 87,228
Samudram, 167
Sāṁkṛti, 65
Saṁskāra, 25
Saṁyu, 36,62,201
Sanctity, 80
Sanctuary, 66
Sandal, 90
Sandalpaste, 99
Saṅdhini, 17
Śañkara, 15
Sañkhapuşhpi, 168
Sañkhinī, 22
Sanskrit, 2,11
Sāṅta, 22
Saṅtānaka, 114
Saṅtapana, 141
Sāṅtiparva, 6
Sanyāsa, 247
Sap, 165
Saphire, 90
Sapta Sāgaraka, 88
Saptasindhu, 33
Saramā, 32
Saraswati, 18
Sarat, 173
Sarayu, 64
Sarma, 79
Sarvadhurina, 20
Sarvakamadugha, 38
Sasabindu, 65
Śaśīyasī, 62
Śaşkulis, 58
Saşṭika, 67
Śatapuşhpa, 170
Śatasṛṅga, 118
Sataudanāgauḥ, 7
Sastras, 32,231
Saturn, 93,99
Satyakāma 212,213,214
Saugaṅdhika, 90
Saurabhēyā, 20
Saurabhēyī, 17
Sauvarchala, 167
Savitar, 130,131
Savitṛ, 165,185,211
Sāvitrī, 231
Sāyaṇa, 62,129
S.C.D. Gupta, 8,202,263,264
Science, 177
Scientist, 181
Scriptures, 75,76
Sea, 14,15
Season, 73
Seed, 13
Seer, 8
Semisavage, 33
Sernuses, 77,79
Serpents, 234,240,241
Service, 46
Sesame, 3, 71, 82, 86 to 88, 92, 96, 98
Shahabad, 26,27
Shahiwal, 23
Sheds, 6,84,188,189,192,263
Sheep, 14
Shirla, 22
Sholapur, 46
Śibi, 64,65,261
Siddhas, 145
Siddhis, 235
Śilāda, 231,232,235
Silk, 89
Silver, 90,99,101
Sīmantonnayana, 34

Sin, 6,57,63,67,70,78,79,82,84,88,91, 100,101,134,137,142,144,148,151 to 153,155,157,169, 174, 189,197,203, 224,251,256,261,262
Sindhu, 22 to 24,242
Singers, 31
Sinīvālī, 130
Sir John Marshall, 22
Sirā, 31
Sire, 48
Śīsira, 157,173
Śīta, 64,122
Ś. Krchchva, 141
Śiva, 48,21,114,112,140,154,229
Śivaghṛta, 166
Siva Liṅga, 256
Siva Ratrivrata, 95
Sixteen, 77
Skaṅda, 154
Skāṅda Purāṇa, 3,80,99,102
Sky, 15
Śleṣma, 171,172
Small Pox, 174
Smoke, 214
Snake, 77,157,237
Sobhari, 127
Society, 68
Soil, 114
Solar, 73,227
Solstial, 73
Soma, 11,14,17,32,36,50,62,68,135,148, 165,174,186,198,209,210
Sõmaka, 65
Son, 71,86,215,228,229
Soul, 71 76,82,84,98,101,111,128,143, 156,194,201,252
South, 26,213
Speech, 11,12
Sperm, 171
Spirit, 54,55,74,84
Spleen, 171
Spleen-enlargement, 166,167,262
Spokesman, 63
Śrāddhā Ceremony, 57
Sri Vastava, 180
Śṛṅgiṇī, 17,260
Śṛtaratha, 261
Śṛti, 6,79
Stall, 63
Stāri, 18
State, 213
Stealing, 193
Steeds, 11,64,65
Starving, 205
Sterlity, 168
Straw, 68
Strippings, 176
Student, 34
Stomach, 205
Subhadra, 15,38
Substitutes, 71,80,85,86
Sūdaḥ, 62,261
Sudāsa, 65
Sudāma, 113,118,119
Sudaṅti, 22
Sudha, 38,166
Sudhanvan, 11
Śūdra, 36,88,142,191,221
Sudughā, 11
Sugar, 177
Śuka, 142
Śuklapittam, 167
Śulka, 32
Summer, 189
Sumanā, 15
Sumanasā, 22
Sun, 3,12,55,63,67,70,73,93,98,101, 120, 129, 130, 132, 139, 165, 213, 250
Sunahsepa, 209,210
Sunāsa, 22
Suṅṭhi, 166,167,169
Supatrika, 22
Super-human faculties, 113
Suprabha, 250,253
Supremilight, 112
Supuchchikā, 22
Sumanā, 15
Sumanasā, 22
Surā, 16
Surūpā, 13,22,38
Surabhi, 4,6,14 to 17,21,22,38,64,66, 113,117,119 to 121,135,140,166, 215,223,242

Surya, 129,135
Suşeelā, 15,130
Suśilakā, 22
Sūta, 16
Sutrāperiod, 33
Suvarcala, 166
Suvrata, 18
Svadhā, 120,144,155,166
Svāhā, 12,37,120,259
Svarṇakapilā, 19,69
Śveta, 19,68,86
Svetapiñgalā, 69
Swaraj, 41
Śyāvāswa, 62
Symbol, 2
Śyāmasundara, 116
Syena, 130

T

Taittiriya Saṁhita, 11,54,261
Takram, 168
Tank, 75
Tapas, 72
Tāra, 22
Tārañta, 62,261
Tāreyikā, 22
Taylor, 27
Teacher, 34,77
Teli, 23
Ten, 2,16,40,70,73,76,85,262
Thieves, 32,77
Thousand, 2,3,16,35,36,40,42,43,62, 64,65,69,70,72,73,78,80,81,83,262
Tiger, 5,225,226,230,246 to 248,251, 252
Tiladhenu, 19,85
Tilaka, 5
Tillage, 41,47
Tilling, 27
Tirmdira, 62
Tirtha, 8
Tonic, 168
Tractor, 42
Trade, 41
Travellers, 6,84
Ter acle, 166,168
Treasure, 1,63,260
Treatment, 48
Treta, 63,81
Trihāyanī, 17
Trijatā, 64
Trivatsah, 21
Tṛvṛt, 168,170
Turyavāh, 21
Tuşitās, 17
Twaşṭr, 17
Tryavayah, 21

U

Udāvarta, 168
Udders, 83,238
Ukşa, 20
Ulcerative Endocarditis, 168
Ulcers, 168
Umā, 95,227,228
Under-feeding, 204
Universe, 238,247
Upamanyu, 166,216,217
Upananda, 35
Upanayana, 35,216,227
Upasarya, 17
Uppalam, 168
Uragas, 260
Urinary Bladder, 175
Urine, 5,37,41,170,171,173,198,262
Urustaṁba, 170
Uruvaka, 167
Urvaśī, 165
Uşas, 211
Usrā, 17,20,260
Usrikā, 20
Uśīnara, 64,65,218
Usriyā, 17,20,260
Uterus, 205
Uttarphalguṇī, 67

V

Vacha, 168
Vahā, 20

Vahaputra, 17
Vaikuṇṭha, 81,84,88
Vairāṭapṛṣṭam, 21,69
Vaiśyas, 5,34,35,36,41,76,84
Vaisnavī, 80
Vaitaraṇī, 84,88
Vaivaswata, 17
Vāk, 67
Vala, 32
Vālmīki, 2,37
Value, 80
Vāmā, 22
Vāmana, 22
Vaṁśaga, 20
Vandhya, 7
Vanij, 32
Varieties, 55
Varuṇa, 12,14,17,33,54,62,63,68,231
Varṣa, 173
Vaśā, 2,17,18
Vāsaka, 173
Vasanta, 167
Vāsithā, 18
Vasna, 32
Vasistha, 2,14,37,38,41,64,173
Vasu, 80
Vāsuki, 15
Vasus, 4,16,38,70,71
Vasūni, 18
Vāta, 167
Vātagulma, 168
Vātaraktam, 16}
Vatsa, 20
Vatsatara, 20
Vāyu, 4,13,68
Vedas, 1,2,4,7,15,35,39,58,65,70,77, 78,81,82
Veda Vyāsa, 2
Vedānta, 73
Vedic, 6,45,55
Vegetarians, 42
Vehat, 17,18
Vena, 16,31
Veneration, 6,178
Vermifuge, 169
Vestige, 57
Victim, 7,33
Viḍaṅga, 167
Vigour, 56
Vikaṇṭaka, 13
Vīṇā, 70
Vinatā, 22
Vinobabhave, 41
Virgo, 73
Virtue, 78
Viśākha, 67
Visṭāri, 128
Viṣṇu, 3,5,15,16,17,33,57,73,81,82
Viṣṇuloka, 81
Visnupurana, 3
Viśṛte, 18
Viśwedevas, 69
Viśwagaswa, 65
Viśwāmitra, 37,214,215
Vitamin, 46,177 to 179
Vivaswan, 17
Voelcker, 43,202
Voice, 14
Vow, 71
Vow of truth, 75,77
Vṛṣa, 20
Vraja, 58
Vrṣala, 21
Vṛṣabha, 6,20,79
Vrṣotsarjana, 7,57
Vrddhokṣa, 20
Vṛsabhānu, 37
Vrsabhanu Vara, 37
Vultures, 5
Vysya, 34
Vyoṣa, 169

W

Wardha, 45
Water, 11,78
Wealth, 2,33,34,35,41,42,61,62,65,77, 78,80
Wealthy-Ones, 18
Weapon, 224
Welfare, 14,58,263
Well, 216,256,257
White, 68

White Bull, 7
Wife, 16,34
Wild-Cattle, 23
Wind, 12,68
Wives, 78
Woman, 77
Womb, 22,77
World, 4,5,7,14,67,73,81,84,85
Worshippers, 11,201

Y

Yāga, 1,2,61
Yajna, 53,54,55
Yajurveda, 262
Yama, 3,68,70,71,72
Yamaloka, 85
Yamuna, 81
Yaṣṭi, 168,169
Yaṣṭi Madhu, 168
Yavākṣāra, 168
Yayāti, 64,65
Year, 73,75,76
Years, 81
Yellowish, 69
Yojana, 85
Yudhiṣṭira, 65,230,261,264
Yuga, 63,73
Yujya, 20
Yuktikalpataru, 257

Z

Zamindar, 47

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